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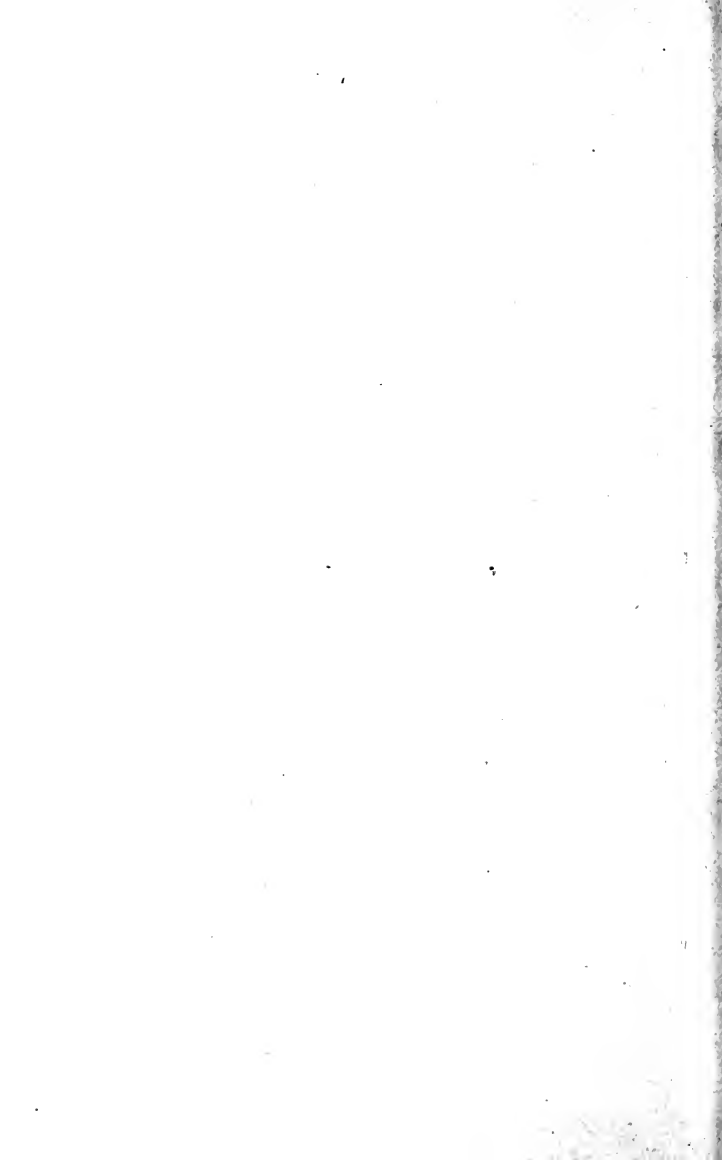
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BASED UPON THE REVISED VERSION OF 1881

BY

ENGLISH AND AMERICAN SCHOLARS

AND MEMBERS OF THE REVISION COMMITTEE

EDITED BY

PHILIP SCHAFF, D. D., LL. D.

*Professor of Sacred Literature in the Union Theological Seminary of New York,  
President of the American Committee on Revision.*

VOL. VI.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

BY PROF. M. B. RIDDLE

NEW YORK  
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1884

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# THE EPISTLE OF PAUL

TO THE

# ROMANS

EXPLAINED BY

MATTHEW B. RIDDLE, D. D.

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NEW YORK  
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1884



## PREFACE.

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The present volume, like the others of the International Revision series, contains the notes already published in the 'Popular Illustrated Commentary,' adapted to the text of the Revised Version. Additions have, however, been made, from recent exegetical works, and from the results of renewed personal study.

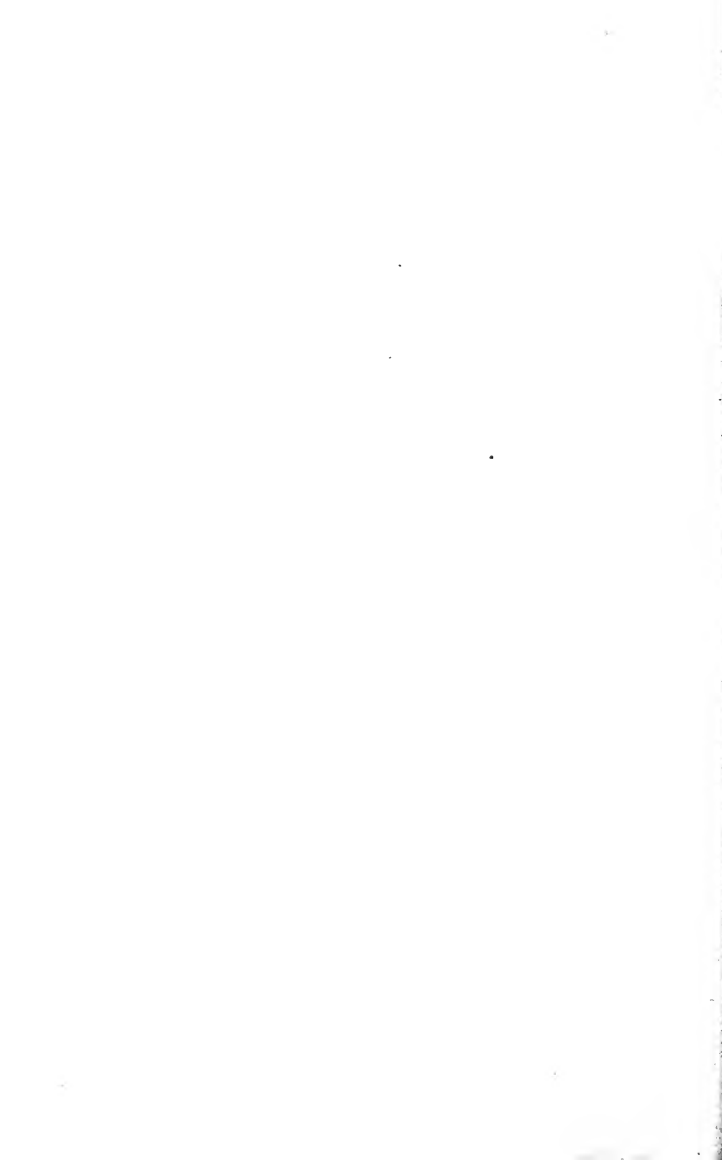
In assuming, formally, the literary responsibility for the following pages, the writer desires to express his indebtedness to Dr. Schaff, for the privilege of using, at discretion, his numerous critical and doctrinal additions to the volume on Romans in the American edition of Lange's Commentary. Special acknowledgment will be found, whenever in the present volume extended use has been made of the contributions of Dr. Schaff, to the work just named; in which, it may be added, the greater number of the emendations in Romans, accepted by the Revisers, already appeared.

No one can doubt that great advances have been made in recent years, toward a more exact interpretation of this Epistle; yet on the eve of celebrating the four hundredth anniversary of Luther's birth, modern scholarship gladly acknowledges that the great Reformer caught the true significance of this great Epistle. This little volume seeks to hold firmly the same main position, but also to put the English reader in possession of the results of scholarly labor in this century.

Fifteen years of special study devoted to this Epistle lead the writer to appreciate the more keenly how much greater it is, than all commentaries.

M. B. RIDDLE.

HARTFORD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,  
*October, 1883.*



# I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

## EPISTLES OF PAUL.

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§ 1. LIFE OF PAUL. § 2. CHARACTER OF PAUL. § 3. CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE EPISTLES. § 4. CHARACTER OF THE EPISTLES.

### § 1. *Life of the Apostle.*<sup>1</sup>

THE great Apostle of the Gentiles is the author of the much larger half of the didactic portion of the New Testament, while his labors form the subject of the larger half of the one historical book, which tells of the spread of Christianity. He was the instrument chosen to give the religion of Christ the wider range, both of thought and of territory, for which it was designated. Hence a failure to apprehend his life and character necessarily involves ignorance of the historical beginnings of Christianity, both as a system and as a vital force in the world.

Paul, whose Hebrew name was Saul,<sup>2</sup> the son of Jewish parents,

<sup>1</sup>The two great English works on the *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, by Conybeare and Howson (in numerous editions), and by Thomas Lewin, have recently been supplemented by a third, from the pen of Canon Farrar (1879), which is more critical than either of the others, dealing less with the environments of the great Apostle, but seeking to enter more fully into his inner history. It has not been deemed necessary to refer to these, except when directly cited. *The History of the Christian Church*, by the general editor, and the volume on *Romans*, in Lange's *Commentary*, give the details in regard to most of the points here touched upon. The proper articles in the *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopædia*, in Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, and kindred works, will be consulted by those who are interested in special questions.

<sup>2</sup>The name 'Saul' occurs in the Acts up to chap. 13: 9, where in the presence of Sergius Paulus, the Roman proconsul, the Apostle rebukes the Jewish sorcerer; here we read: 'Saul (who is also called Paul);' afterwards the name 'Paul' is exclu-

of the tribe of Benjamin (Phil. 3 : 5 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 22), was a native of Tarsus, in Cilicia, a city of commercial and literary renown. He therefore belonged to the 'Dispersion,' to the Hellenistic (or, Greek speaking) Jews, whose peculiarities of religious expression were moulded by the Septuagint. That he was by birth a Roman citizen appears from Acts 16 : 37 ; 22 : 28. His theological education was received in the school of the famous Pharisee, Gamaliel (Acts 22 : 3 ; 26 : 4, 5 ; comp. Acts 5 : 34, etc.). Whether he was learned in Greek literature has been much disputed, but that he was not ignorant of Hellenic philosophy and poetry is clear from Acts 17 : 25 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 32 ; Tit. 1 : 12. Yet his Epistles show that the controlling human element in his training was that of the Rabbinical school of Gamaliel.<sup>1</sup> This is but fitting, on any theory which recognizes the place of the Jewish people in the history of Redemption. Whatever of truth that people conserved was held by the Pharisees ; and among the Pharisees who appear at that epoch, Gamaliel is preëminent. 'Thus, a "Hebrew of the Hebrews," yet at the same time a native Hellenist, and a Roman citizen, he combined in himself, so to speak, the three great nationalities of the ancient world, and was endowed with all the natural qualifications for a universal apostleship.'<sup>2</sup> But while he possessed

sively used. There are two views: (1.) that there was a change of name at this time, in commemoration of the conversion of the proconsul; (2.) that the Apostle had two names, being commonly known among the Gentile churches by the Latin (or, Hellenistic) name, which the historian uses exclusively after the Apostle is brought in contact with the Gentiles. Against (1.) is the fact that Sergius Paulus was not yet converted at the time when the name 'Paul' first appears; and that teachers are not named after their pupils, but the reverse; in favor of (2.) is the fact that it was customary with the Jews to have two names, and in intercourse with Gentiles to use the Greek or Latin one (Acts 12 : 12, 25 ; 13 : 1-7 ; Col. 4 : 11 : see, also, the lists of the Apostles). To explain the change as due to Paul's own conversion is unwarranted, since the name 'Saul' occurs in the narrative of events eight years later.

<sup>1</sup> From Acts 26 : 10, where 'voice' means 'vote,' it has been inferred that Saul of Tarsus was a member of the Sanhedrin, when Stephen was tried. This would imply that he had been married. It is difficult to establish so important a point on so slight evidence. In Gal. 1 : 14, some allusion to such a position might have been expected, had Paul been a member of the Sanhedrin. But in favor of this view, see Lewin, *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, 1, p. 14, and elsewhere. Canon Farrar adopts the same opinion, with inferences. The last-named author is quite full on the Rabbinical training of the Apostle (*St. Paul*, 1, chap. 3, and elsewhere throughout).

<sup>2</sup> Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, 1, p. 287.



'natural qualifications' only,—in the absence of gracious qualifications,—he became 'a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious' (1 Tim. 1: 13), appearing first in the New Testament narrative as a young man zealous for the death of the first Christian martyr, Stephen (Acts 7: 58; 8: 1). He seems, after this, to have put himself at the head of the persecution (Acts 8: 3; 9: 1, 2); and, having obtained authority from the high-priest, was on his way to Damascus, to lay hold of the Christians he might find there, when the hand of Divine grace laid hold of him. That Jesus whom, in the persons of His disciples, he was persecuting, appeared to him and transformed the persecutor into a humble disciple.

The importance of this occurrence is indicated by the repeated accounts in the Acts (9: 1-19; 22: 3-16; 26: 19-20), as well as the numerous allusions to it in the Pauline Epistles, especially Gal. 1: 11-16. That there was a real objective appearance of Christ is proven from 1 Cor. 15: 8, and by the failure to account for the transformation on any other theory. Whatever may have been the preparation for this office, which Paul received from his previous training, his conversion was a complete transformation of his life.

The relation of Paul to the original twelve Apostles is open to discussion. There are two theories: (1.) That Paul was the twelfth Apostle, properly taking the place vacated by Judas; (2.) That there were twelve Apostles from the Jews (including Matthias), and that Paul was a distinct Apostle to the Gentiles. The latter is the more tenable view, but must not be made the basis of a continuance and succession in the Apostolic office. 'The divine irregularity of his call, and the subsequent independence of his labors make Paul, so to speak, a prototype of evangelical Protestantism, which has always looked to him as its main authority, as Romanism to Peter.'<sup>1</sup> (Schaff, *Apostolic Church*, p. 234.)

The conversion of Paul may be regarded as his call to the Apos-

<sup>1</sup> The theories of Dr. Baur, of Tübingen, and his followers, which 'represent the gospel of Paul as having originated from the intrinsic action of his own mind, and the event at Damascus as a visionary picture drawn from his own spirit' (Meyer), have been repeatedly answered. Indeed, 'after a renewed investigation of the subject, the celebrated historian arrived at the conclusion that the conversion of Paul was an enigma, which cannot be satisfactorily solved by any psychological or dialectic analysis' (Schaff, in Lange, *Romans*, p. 5).

toxic office, but he did not enter fully on his Apostolic work until seven years later (Acts 13: 12). He had, indeed, three years after his conversion, received in the temple at Jerusalem, a direct revelation of his mission to the Gentiles (Acts 22: 17-21), and had preached at Damascus, apparently soon after he recovered his sight (Acts 9: 19, 20). 'For all half-heartedness was foreign to him; now, too, he was, whatever he was, *thoroughly*, and the energetic unity of his profound nature was now sanctified throughout by the living spirit of Christ' (Meyer). However, this activity was not long continued, for he himself tells of his withdrawal to Arabia (Gal. 1: 17). This was doubtless for the purpose of retirement, a sort of substitution for a three years' intercourse with the Lord, enjoyed by the other Apostles. (Compare Gal. 1: 19.) Returning to Damascus he became the object of Jewish persecution (Acts 9: 23, 25; 2 Cor. 11: 32, 33), but escaped to Jerusalem, where he encountered the doubt, if not the suspicion, of the disciples (Acts 9: 26). At this time he met the Apostle Peter (Gal. 1: 18, 19), but seems not to have gained the full confidence of the other Apostles, until his labors among the heathen bore such fruit as to place his Divine call and peculiar mission beyond all doubt. Even during his fifteen days' stay at Jerusalem he incurred the enmity of the Hellenistic Jews, and departed to Tarsus to escape their plots. From Tarsus he came to Antioch, after an interval of a few years, having been brought there by Barnabas (Acts 11: 25, 26), with whom he was associated in carrying alms to the church at Jerusalem (Acts 11: 29, 30). Shortly afterwards (A. D. 45), he began his wider missionary activity. Luke, his companion, mentions in the Acts three great missionary journeys of the Apostle to the Gentiles.

1. He set out (A. D. 45) under the special direction of the Holy Ghost, given through the prophets and the congregation at Antioch. His companions were Barnabas and John Mark (Acts 13: 15; comp. 16: 37). Landing at Salamis, in Cyprus, they traversed the island from east to west. At Paphos they encountered a Jewish sorcerer, whom Paul rebuked and punished, the result being the conversion of the Roman proconsul Sergius Paulus, who had been the patron of Elymas (Acts 13: 5-12). They departed thence to

Perga, where Mark deserted them (Acts 13: 13). At Antioch, in Pisidia, the next important point to which they journeyed, the first marked success of the gospel occurred, accompanied by the bitter opposition of unbelieving Jews. A careful study of the account (Acts 13: 14-52) reveals all the marked characteristics of the whole religious movement inaugurated by Paul and Barnabas. Henceforth Paul's mission was to the Gentiles, although he never ceased to put forth efforts for his kinsmen according to the flesh. The leading incidents of the remainder of this journey were: the miracle of healing a cripple at Lystra; the attempt at idolatrous worship of Paul and Barnabas by the superstitious Lystrians; the sudden change into hatred against them at the same place, instigated by Jews from Antioch and Iconium; the stoning of the missionaries; their escape from death; their successful return to Antioch.

2. At the Apostolic Council in Jerusalem (A. D. 50), the difference between Jewish and Gentile Christianity was discussed and adjusted, Paul being present as a living witness to his own success among the Gentiles (Acts 15). The second missionary journey was undertaken in the year 51, by Paul, independently of Barnabas; Mark being the occasion of their separation. Having visited his old churches in Syria and Cilicia, he proceeded, with the help of a young convert, Timothy (Acts 16: 1-3), to establish new ones throughout Phrygia and Galatia. A special intervention of the Holy Spirit compelled them to journey unto Troas, when, in obedience to a heavenly vision, and in answer to the Macedonian cry: 'Come over and help us,' he crossed into Greece (Acts 16: 6-12). In Greece (the Roman provinces of Macedonia and Achaia) he proceeded with great success, the seal of the Divine approval of his universal mission. At Philippi, the first city where he labored in Europe, a purple dealer, named Lydia, was the first to embrace the new religion. There he came in conflict with heathen superstition, and was imprisoned with Silas, but was miraculously delivered, and honorably released. Luke seems to have been of the company, from Troas to Philippi, where he probably remained until Paul's final journey to Jerusalem. (Compare Acts 16: 10; 17: 1; 20: 5.) The next place of activity was Thessalonica, where he was

persecuted by Jews, but left a flourishing church, to which he wrote his earliest Epistles. While laboring at Berea, the enmity of Jews from Thessalonica drove Paul away to Athens, where he reasoned with Stoic and Epicurean philosophers, and delivered, on Mars' hill, a remarkable discourse, without great result on the spot, although its effect is still felt everywhere. Coming to Corinth, his labors assumed a more settled character. This city was the commercial centre between the East and West, a flourishing seat of wealth and civilization. Here he spent eighteen months, and, despite great obstacles, built up a church, which exhibited all the virtues and all the follies of the Grecian character, under the influence of the gospel. The two important Epistles written to this Christian congregation show us more fully than any other documents the inner life of the early Church. In the spring of 54, he returned, by way of Ephesus, Cæsarea, and Jerusalem, to Antioch.

3. Towards the close of the same year Paul went to Ephesus. In this renowned city, the capital of proconsular Asia, he labored successfully for three years, and then visited the churches in Macedonia and Achaia, remaining three months in Corinth and the vicinity. During this period were written the Epistles to the Galatians, to the Corinthians, and to the Romans. From these we see what hostile influences of Jewish origin opposed the Apostle in his labors.

4. The last (fifth) journey to Jerusalem was made by the Apostle in the spring of 58, for the purpose of carrying to the poor brethren in Judea a contribution from the Christians of Greece (Rom. 15: 25, 26; compare 1 Cor. 16: 1-3). The route traversed by the Apostle was through Philippi, Troas, and Miletus (where he delivered his affectionate valedictory to the Ephesian elders), Tyre, and Cæsarea. The time of his arrival at Jerusalem was shortly before Pentecost, when the city was thronged with Jews from all regions. Some of the brethren at Jerusalem suggested to him, as a matter of prudence, to appear in the Temple with certain Nazarites to prove the falsity of the charge made against him, that he taught the Hellenistic Jews to forsake the law of Moses. While in the Temple some fanatical Jews from Asia raised an uproar against him, charging him with profaning the Temple; they dragged him out of the

sacred enclosure, lest he should defile it with his blood, and were about to kill him, when Claudius Lysias, the Roman tribune, hearing the uproar, appeared with his soldiers. This officer released Paul from the mob, sent him to the Sanhedrin, and, after a stormy and fruitless session of this body and the discovery of a plot against his life, sent him with a strong guard and a letter implying his innocence, to the procurator Felix in Cæsarea. Here the Apostle was confined two whole years (A. D. 58, 60), awaiting trial before the Sanhedrin, occasionally speaking before Felix, apparently treated with comparative mildness, visited by the Christians, and doubtless in some way not recorded, promoting the kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup> When Festus succeeded Felix, Paul, as a Roman citizen, appealed to the tribunal of the Emperor, and this opened the way to the fulfilment of his long cherished desire to preach at Rome. Having once more testified his innocence, and made a masterly defence before Festus and Agrippa (King Herod Agrippa II.), he was sent in the autumn of the year 60 to the Emperor. After a stormy voyage and a shipwreck, which detained him and his companions during the winter at Malta, he reached Rome in the spring of the following year. Here he spent at least two years in easy confinement, preaching the gospel to the soldiers who attended him; writing letters to his distant Churches in Asia Minor and Greece (Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians), organizing and directing the labors of others, thus fulfilling his Apostolic mission even in bonds and in prison.

5. The account in the Book of Acts breaks off at this point in Paul's career.

The usual view of the remainder of his life, supported by tradition, by hints in the Pastoral Epistles, and by the statements of the earliest church fathers, is somewhat as follows: at the end of two years' imprisonment, Paul was released, before the persecution under Nero (A. D. 64). He probably went at once to Ephesus, where he left Timothy (1 Tim. 1:3), on proceeding to Macedonia. His next journey was to Crete, passing through Troas and Miletus. Titus was left in Crete, as is inferred from the Epistle addressed to

<sup>1</sup> Meyer, Weiss, and others date the Epistles to the Colossians, Ephesians and to Philemon during this imprisonment; but without sufficient reason.

him. A winter, during this interval of freedom, seems to have been spent at Nicopolis (Tit. 3: 12), before which the Apostle had written the First Epistle to Timothy, and that to Titus. A journey to Spain, and even to Britain, has been supposed to have taken place; but of this there are no historical traces. It is generally held that he was re-arrested, and, after writing the Second Epistle to Timothy during his second imprisonment, was executed at Rome; but the date assigned varies from A. D. 66 to 68. Tradition says that Peter had been brought to Rome, and that the two Apostles suffered martyrdom on the same day, adding a number of legends. But there is no certain evidence in the New Testament that Peter ever was at Rome, though it is not impossible, and is made quite probable by the universal tradition of the second century (comp. *Introd. to Romans*, § 1). Of the fact of *Paul's* martyrdom at Rome, under Nero, there can be little doubt; and also that, being a Roman citizen, he was put to death by the sword. The view which denies a second imprisonment places the death of Paul in A. D. 64, in connection with the first persecution under Nero, and shortly after the time at which the Book of Acts closes.

This question of a second imprisonment cannot, with our present insufficient data, be solved with mathematical certainty. But on the theory of but one imprisonment, it is very difficult to find a suitable place for the Pastoral Epistles, or to account for certain historical facts assumed in those writings, as well as to understand their valedictory tone and general spirit. Hence the admission of the genuineness of these writings usually leads to an acceptance of the theory of a second imprisonment. (Comp. Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, I. pp. 331-333.) It seems impossible to deny that he was near the close of his earthly life of devotion to Christ, when he penned the triumphant words: 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not only to me, but also unto all them that have loved his appearing' (2 Tim. 4. 7, 8).

### § 2. *Character of the Apostle Paul.*

Of the character of the Apostle Paul, we have the fullest repre-

sentation in his numerous Epistles and the book of the Acts. Endowed with uncommon depth and acuteness of thought, with great energy and strong will, he first appears at the head of the zealots for the traditions of his fathers, a persecutor of the Nazarenes. But cursing Saul was transformed into praying Paul, the cruel persecutor into the most successful advocate of Christianity. This transformation was wrought by Jesus himself appearing to him out of Heaven. Thus all those gifts of nature, which were used by him as a persecutor, became gifts of the Holy Ghost, and were consecrated to the service of Christ crucified. 'The same energy, decision, and consistency, but coupled with gentleness, meekness, and wisdom; the same inflexibility of purpose, but no disposition to use violence or unholy means; the same independence and lordliness, but animated by the most self-denying love, which strives to become all things to all men; the same, nay, still greater zeal for the glory of God, but cleansed of all impure motives; the same inexorable rigor, not, however, against erring brethren, but only against sin and all impeachment of the merits of Christ; the same fire, no longer that of a passionate zealot, but of a mind at rest, considerate, and self-possessed; the same dialectic acumen of a Rabbin of Gamaliel's school, no longer busied, however, with useless subtleties, but employed to vindicate evangelical doctrine and oppose all self-righteousness.'<sup>1</sup>

### § 3. *Order of the Epistles of Paul.*

Thirteen of the books of the New Testament were certainly written by the Apostle Paul, and the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews is also ascribed to him, and is undoubtedly Pauline in its thought. As is well known, the Epistles of Paul have been arranged in the New Testament by another principle than that of chronological order; the larger Epistles to the churches coming first, and the Epistles to individuals coming last. The exact date of writing in the case of the several Epistles, and hence their chronological order, is open to great discussion. We place the conversion of Paul in A. D. 37. The dates of the more important events of his life would then be as follows:—

<sup>1</sup> Schaff's *History of Apostolic Church*, p. 441.

	A. D.
First visit to Jerusalem . . . . .	40
Second visit to Jerusalem . . . . .	44
Beginning of first missionary journey . . . . .	45
Council at Jerusalem (third visit) . . . . .	50
Second missionary journey begun . . . . .	51
Fourth visit to Jerusalem . . . . .	54
Third missionary journey begun . . . . .	54
Fifth and last visit to Jerusalem (spring) . . . . .	58
Imprisonment at Cesarea . . . . .	58-60
Voyage to Rome (autumn) . . . . .	60, 61
First imprisonment at Rome . . . . .	61-63
Release and second imprisonment (?) . . . . .	63-67 (?)
Martyrdom . . . . .	64 or 67

On the latter points, see § I.

In conformity with this table, we arrange the Epistles into three groups, —

1. *Before* the first imprisonment (A. D. 53-58): Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans.

2. *During* the first imprisonment (A. D. 61-64): Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, Philippians; probably Hebrews.

3. *After* the first imprisonment (uncertain date, but before 67): Pastoral Epistles (2 Timothy written last).

The points most open to dispute are: the position of Galatians in the first group, of Philippians in the second, and the date of the third group.

#### § 4. *Character of the Epistles of Paul.*

As a whole, the Epistles form an inexhaustible mine to the profoundest thought on the highest themes, without a parallel in the history of epistolary literature.<sup>1</sup> They exhibit most fully the Christian system of truth, and reveal most plainly the inner life, both of the writer and of the congregations to which they are addressed. Specially adapted to the wants of these original recipients, they are yet applicable to the Church in all ages and countries. Strictly speaking, they are all pastoral letters, containing doctrinal exposition and practical exhortation. They begin with apostolic salutation and thanksgiving; they close, usually, with

<sup>1</sup> 'When I more narrowly consider the whole genius and character of Paul's style, I must confess that I have found no such sublimity of speaking in Plato himself . . . no exquisiteness of vehemence in Demosthenes equal to his.'—(Beza.)



personal intelligence and greeting, along with the benediction. They give the inner or spiritual history of the Apostolic age, while the Book of Acts records its outward history, each illustrating and confirming the other.<sup>1</sup>

'It is just this occasional character which makes them so peculiarly human. They arose out of actual pressing needs, and they are couched (most of them, at least) in the vivid and fervent language of one who takes a deep and loving interest in the person to whom he is writing, as well as in the subject that he is writing about. Precept and example, doctrine and practice, theology and ethics, are all mixed and blended together. No religious books present the same variety as the Christian, and that because they are in the closest contact with actual life.' (Sanday.)

Taking up the books in the order followed in our New Testament, we find first, in place, size, and importance, the Epistle to the Romans (Corinth, spring, A. D. 58). This was addressed to a church to which Paul was a stranger, and seems adapted to prepare the way for an intended visit. Its theme (chap. 1: 16, 17), is the gospel the power of God unto salvation to every believer, to the Jew first and also to the Greek, since it reveals a righteousness from God to faith. He proves the universal need of this salvation, and then unfolds the gospel itself as God's power, first to justify and then to sanctify. To this he adds an outline of the philosophy of the history of salvation as the revelation of an eternal plan to manifest the divine certainty and calling of the nations, showing alike the divine sovereignty in the calling of the nations, and hu-

<sup>1</sup>The questions respecting the genuineness of these Epistles cannot be fully discussed here. Dr. Baur, of Tübingen, admitted the genuineness of four: Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Romans (except chaps. 15, 16.). The others were written, he held, in the second century, mainly for the purpose of harmonizing the two opposing schools of Christianity which followed Peter and Paul respectively, as representatives of Jewish and Gentile tendencies. This theory leaves the most profound productions of early Christian literature without any acknowledged author, and places them at a time when no one lived who gave any token that he could have written them. The further progress of the liberal school of criticism leads to more positive results. Hilgenfeld, for example, admits the genuineness of seven of the Pauline Epistles, adding to those acknowledged by Baur, 1 Thessalonians, Philippians, and Philemon; Renan accepts these, and Colossians also.

man responsibility in accepting or rejecting the gospel. The last four chapters comprise exhortations and greetings.

The Epistles to the Corinthians (Ephesus, Macedonia, A. D. 57), deal with the virtues and vices, the trials and temptations of a young congregation in the rich and polished commercial capital of Ancient Greece, whose idols were secular wisdom and sensual pleasure. Here the Apostle contrasts the foolish wisdom of the gospel with the wise folly of human philosophy; as in the Romans he represents the same gospel as a *power* of God, which overpowers, at last, all the power of man. Upon the whole, the Corinthians are more ethical and pastoral than dogmatic: but some of the most important doctrinal discussions are interwoven, as the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, in chaps. 10 and 11 of the first Epistle, and the doctrine of the resurrection in chap. 15.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians proceeded from profound agitation of the mind and heart, and gives us an insight into the personal character and experience of the Apostle, his trials and joys, his severity and tenderness, his noble pride and deep humility. his constant care and anxiety for the welfare of his spiritual children.

The Epistle to the Galatians (Ephesus, A. D. 54 to 57, or Corinth, A. D. 58) discusses the same theme as the Epistle to the Romans, but more tersely, and in direct opposition to the errors of Judaizing teachers. The council at Jerusalem had opposed the same error, but the old leaven of self-righteousness was still at work, and produced the same legalizing results. The false teachers hated Paul, assailed his doctrine, and questioned his apostolic authority. The Epistle is therefore a defence of his position as an Apostle (chaps. 1 and 2), of his doctrine of justification by faith (chaps. 3 and 4), closing with appropriate exhortations and warnings (chaps. 5 and 6). It remains the bulwark of evangelical freedom, the armory of positive Protestantism.

The Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon were written during the first captivity of Paul in Rome, between 61 and 63. His faith turned his prison into a temple of the Holy Ghost, from which he sent inspiration and comfort to his distant brethren in the far East. The Epistles to the Colossians and

to the Ephesians closely resemble each other (somewhat as do Galatians and Romans), and exhibit Paul's doctrine of Christ and the Church. The Epistle to the Philippians contains likewise an exceedingly, important Christological passage (2: 5-10), but is more personal, and overflows with joy, thanksgiving, and brotherly love. It is his midnight hymn in the dungeon at Philippi, where he founded one of his most flourishing and affectionate congregations.

The two Epistles to the Thessalonians are the earliest, dating from 53 and 54, shortly after the organization of a church at Thessalonica, a commercial city in Macedonia. They correct certain misapprehensions respecting the second coming of Christ and the great apostasy that must precede it, and contain suitable exhortations to a sober, diligent, and watchful life.

The three Pastoral Epistles to Timothy and to Titus contain the last counsels and directions of the Apostle. They refer chiefly to church organization and administration, and the pastoral care of individual members. The Second Epistle to Timothy, written from the prison in Rome, in full view of his approaching martyrdom, is his swan-song. He expects the speedy close of his good fight of faith, and the unfading crown of righteousness awaiting him in the kingdom of glory.

The short Epistle to Philemon exhibits him as a perfect gentleman in his social and personal relations. It is important for the question of slavery and the Apostolic remedy.

The anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews was probably written by a pupil of the Apostle (2: 3), under the influence of the genius of Paul, perhaps with his direct coöperation, apparently between 62 and 64, from some town in Italy (13: 23, 24), to the Christians of Hebrew descent in the East. It warns them against the danger of apostasy, and shows the immeasurable superiority of Christ over Moses, and of the Gospel dispensation over the dispensation of the Law. The latter was a significant type and prophecy of the former, the mysterious fleeting shadow of the abiding substance. Here we find the best exposition of the eternal priesthood and all sufficient sacrifice of Christ. The doctrinal discussions are interwoven with the richest exhortations and consolations, fresh from the fountain of a genuine inspiration. Tradition and conjecture are

divided with reference to the author between Paul, Luke, Barnabas, and Apollos. It is certain from internal evidence that it is full of the Holy Ghost, and speaks with divine authority. Like the mysterious Melchizedek of the seventh chapter, it bears itself with priestly and kingly dignity, and has the power of an endless life.

The Epistles may be briefly characterized as follows:—

Romans: doctrinal (soteriological).

1 and 2 Corinthians: personal and pastoral (practically polemical).

Galatians: personal and doctrinally polemic (soteriological).

Ephesians: doctrinal (Christological and ecclesiological).

Philippians: pastoral and personal.

Colossians: doctrinal (Christological, with polemical parts).

1 and 2 Thessalonians: pastoral and doctrinal (eschatological).

1 and 2 Timothy and Titus: personal and pastoral.

Philemon: personal.

The value of the Epistles of Paul as evidence of the truth of the great facts of Christianity, can scarcely be overestimated. The theories which make our four Gospels compilations of the second century, with only a small basis of historic truth, are proven assumptions by the phenomena of Paul's writings. From those Epistles, the genuineness of which none have doubted, it can be shown that this Apostle accepted and believed the great facts which reveal the Christ of historical Christianity. If any son of Adam has ever trusted in a crucified and risen Saviour, that man was Paul. 'Who can avoid the conclusion that such ought also to be our faith? Or shall we say that Paul was deceived? But who that observes his vigorous intellect, his acuteness of reasoning and, above all, his sound practical judgment, can, for a moment, suppose that such a man could, for the last *thirty* years of his life have been under a delusion? Or shall we impute to him, that, knowing Christianity to be a fable, he practised upon the credulity of mankind to further his own views? But what could have been his inducement? Could wealth or honor? When he became a convert he sacrificed both for penury and disgrace! Did he seek, under cover of a lie, to promote the good of mankind? But who, in his senses, would build on so rotten a foundation? For, how-

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ever cunningly devised, the imposture must, sooner or later, be detected! Besides, it is impossible for any one to read Paul's letters without feeling that he, at least, was an *honest* man. The only alternative is, that Paul had a rational and deep-rooted conviction of the truth of Christianity, and that what he preached to others he believed himself.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lewin, *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, ii. 435.

## II. SPECIAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

### EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

- § 1. THE CONGREGATION AT ROME. § 2. OCCASION AND PURPOSE OF THE EPISTLE. § 3. THEME AND CONTENTS. § 4. TIME AND PLACE OF COMPOSITION. § 5. GENUINENESS AND INTEGRITY. § 6. CHARACTERISTICS.

#### § 1. *The Congregation at Rome.*

THE *origin* of the congregation of Christians at Rome is a matter of inference and conjecture. That such a congregation existed at the time Paul wrote, is of course undoubted, and taken for granted in the Book of the Acts (chap. 27: 15). An altogether untrustworthy tradition dates the first preaching during the life of our Lord. Some Jews from Rome *may* have been converted on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 10), and on their return formed the nucleus of a Jewish Christian Congregation; but more than this cannot be safely affirmed. The Roman ecclesiastical tradition which claims that the Apostle Peter was the founder of the Roman Church, is without any positive historical support. It cannot be proven that the Apostle Peter was in Rome before A. D. 63; even the universal testimony of tradition, that he there labored after that time and suffered martyrdom under Nero, has been repeatedly disputed by modern scholars. (Comp. Schaff, *History of Christian Church*, § 36.) The statement of Eusebius, which tells of his removal there in A. D. 42, and of a twenty-five years' subsequent residence, is contrary to Acts 15, Gal. 2: 11. Furthermore, Paul would probably not have written to the Christians at Rome, if another Apostle had founded the congregation (comp. Acts 19: 21; Rom. 15: 20; 2 Cor. 10: 16). Nor do we find any traces of Peter's

labors there in the Book of the Acts. 'We may add that our Epistle — since Peter cannot have labored in Rome before it was written — is a fact destructive of the historical basis of the Papacy; in so far as the latter is made to rest on the founding of the Roman Church and the exercise of its episcopate by that Apostle. For Paul, the writing of such a didactic Epistle to a church of which he knew Peter to be the founder and bishop, would have been, according to the principle of his apostolic independence, an impossible inconsistency' (Meyer).

It is, however, quite evident that the congregation had been founded some years before A. D. 58, when our Epistle was written. The Apostle had desired to visit the Christians there for many years (chap. 15: 23; comp. chap. 1: 13), and refers to those among them who had been converted before himself (chap. 16: 7). The widespread fame of the church (chap. i. 8), and its different places of assembly (chap. 16: 5, 14, 15), confirm this view. Rome being the centre of all travel, full of foreigners from every part of the Empire, and with a large number of Jewish residents (comp. also Acts 28: 17 ff.), the gospel might have been carried thither earlier than to Asia Minor, or Greece. If the edict of Claudius (A. D. 51), banishing the Jews from the city (comp. Acts 18: 2), was occasioned by controversies excited by the introduction of Christianity,<sup>1</sup> then a very early origin must be admitted. Still 'we may suppose that the gospel was preached there in a confused and imperfect form, scarcely more than a phase of Judaism, as in the case of Apollos at Corinth (Acts 18: 25), or the disciples at Ephesus (Acts 19: 1-3).' Lightfoot. Even if there was no organized Christian community at the time of the edict of Claudius, the banishment of the Jews, followed by their speedy return, is closely connected with the

<sup>1</sup> Suetonius says that Claudius banished the Jews because they kept up a tumult at the instigation of *Chrestus* (*impulsore Chresto*). This 'Chrestus' 'may have been a seditious Jew then living, one of those political false prophets, who abounded in Palestine before the destruction of Jerusalem. But as no such person is otherwise known to us, and as it is a fact that the Romans often used Chrestus for Christus, it is more than probable that the same mistake is made also in this edict; and the popular tumults must, accordingly, be referred to the controversies between the Jews and Christians, who were at that time, in the view of the heathen, not very distinct from one another (Schaff, *Hist. Christian Church*, § 37). Comp. Lange, *Romans*, p. 31, where the authorities and arguments on both sides are given.

growth of the Roman congregation, as it existed when Paul wrote. 'Fugitives from neighboring Greece became Christians and disciples of Paul; and after their return to Rome were heralds of Christianity, and took part in organizing a congregation. This is historically proved by the example of Aquila and Priscilla, who, when Jews, emigrated to Corinth, lived there over a year and a half, in the company of Paul, and subsequently appeared as teachers in Rome and occupants of a house where the Roman congregation assembled (Rom. 16: 3). Probably other individuals mentioned in chap. 16 were led by God in a similar way; but it is certain that Aquila and Priscilla occupied a most important position among the founders of the congregation; for among the many teachers whom Paul salutes in chap 16 he presents his first greeting to them, and this, too, with such flattering commendation as he bestows upon none of the rest' (Meyer). This would hold equally good if, as is not unlikely, Aquila and his wife had become believers before the banishment from Rome. If Gentiles had been converted in that city, the edict would not have affected them; while the returning Jews who had felt Paul's influence would be all the more ready to fraternize closely with them rather than with their unbelieving countrymen. This natural result accounts for the tone used by the leading Jews in their interview with Paul at Rome (Acts 28: 21, 22).

This introduces the much discussed question, whether the Roman Christians were mainly of Jewish or Gentile extraction. (See § 2, on the relation of this question to the purpose of the Epistle.) We have already indicated the presence of a numerous Jewish element, and the Epistle itself points to the same fact (see on chaps. 4: 1, 12; 7: 1-6; 14: 1 ff.; 15: 8). The traces of Judaizing influences are, however, very slight, although the letters written during Paul's imprisonment show that these adverse tendencies were present at the later period. Christianity at Rome was therefore Pauline in its type when Paul wrote this Epistle. The theory of Dr. Baur, that the Church was not only Jewish but Judaistic and anti-Pauline, is altogether unwarranted. It seems most probable that the great majority of the congregation was composed of believers of Gentile origin. Rome was the centre of the Gentile



world, and maintained constant intercourse with those places where Paul's success among the Gentiles had been most marked (*e. g.*, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth). The Epistle itself gives indications of his preponderance; see on chaps. 1: 5-7, 13; 11: 13, 25, 28; 14: 1; 15: 15, 16; in the last passage he grounds his right to instruct and strengthen the Roman Christians upon his call to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. The fact that the Epistle was written in Greek sheds little light upon the question before us, since the Jews visited Rome would all speak that language.<sup>1</sup> But it seems probable that the Gentile Christians were mainly from the Greek population of Rome, which, pure and mixed, formed a large and important fraction of the whole. The names in chap. 16 are mainly Greek,<sup>2</sup> only a few are Latin. From this list of names Bishop Lightfoot makes the following inference as to the rank and station of the believers: 'Among the less wealthy merchants and tradesmen, among the petty officers of the army, among the slaves and freedmen of the imperial palace—whether Jews or Greeks—the gospel would first find a firm footing. To this last class allusion is made in Phil. 4: 22: "they that are of Cæsar's household." From these it would gradually work upwards and downwards; but we may be sure that in respect of rank the Church of Rome was no exception to the general, that "not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble" were called (1 Cor. 1: 20).'

The subsequent history of the Roman Church does not fall within the limits of this Introduction, but this sketch of its beginnings may well be closed by these words of Dr. Lange: 'As the light and darkness of Judaism was centralized in Jerusalem, the theocratic city of God (the holy city, the murderer of the prophets), so was heathen Rome, the humanitarian metropolis of the world, the centre of all the elements of light and darkness prevalent in the heathen world; and so did Christian Rome become the centre of

<sup>1</sup> On the general use of the Greek language at that period, see Dr. Alexander Roberts, *Discussion on the Gospels*; Smith, *Bible Dictionary*, Amer. ed., *Language of the New Testament*, by Professor Hadley; compare also the first part of Schaff's *Companion to the Greek Testament*.

<sup>2</sup> See § 5, where the questions respecting that chapter are discussed, and the Excur. sus on pp. 255, 256. If it was not addressed to Rome, then, of course, no inference can be drawn from it in regard to that congregation.

vital light, and of all the antichristian darkness in the Christian Church. Hence, Rome, like Jerusalem, not only possesses a unique historical significance, but is a universal form operative through all ages.' See Lange, *Romans*, pp. 29, 30.

### § 2. *Occasion and Purpose of the Epistle.*

The *occasion* was the non-fulfilment of the Apostle's desire to preach at Rome (chap. 1: 9-15). He takes the opportunity, afforded by the departure of Phœbe from Corinth (comp. § 4), to write to the Roman congregation; both to give in writing what he would have announced to them orally, and to pave the way for those personal labors he hoped to put forth among them in the future (chap. 15: 22-32). There has been much discussion as to the *purpose*, involving a variety of opinions as to the occasion. Some writers insist that the Apostle purposed to make a formal doctrinal treatise on soteriology (or, justification by faith); that he prepared it for Rome, because of the importance of the city. This view, while partially true, lessens the personal and historical character of the Epistle.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, many commentators and critics, especially in Germany, have attributed to the Apostle a motive, too exclusively polemical, seeking the occasion for the Epistle in the state of things among the Christians at Rome, assuming peculiar conflicts between the Jewish and Gentile elements, of which the Epistle itself, rightly interpreted, and the Acts of the Apostles, show no trace.<sup>2</sup> Such antagonisms may have appeared, and the

<sup>1</sup> When Paul had been last at Corinth, not only Aquila and Priscilla, but a vast number of other Jews, on their expulsion from the capital by the decree of Claudius, had either passed through Corinth on their way to Judea or other countries, or, like Aquila and Priscilla, had taken up a temporary abode there. Paul had thus the opportunity (of which he availed himself) of securing the friendship of many fellow-countrymen, and it is not a little remarkable that at the close of the Epistle he salutes two households, and no less than twenty-six different individuals, and generally with some discriminating touch of character, so that evidently the Apostle was not paying a cold compliment, but was familiar with their personal and private history.—Lewin's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul* 2: p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Baur, at first, claimed that the Christians at Rome were mainly Jewish, and hostile to Paul; hence that chaps. 9-11 constitute the doctrinal essence of the Epistle. This view he afterwards modified, though still upholding the polemic (or personal apologetic) character of the letter. Schott, on the other hand, makes the Epistle an apology for the Gentile apostolate of Paul before *Gentile* Christians of the

Apostle may have known of them; but that they occasioned the Epistle, or largely modified its plan, seems very unlikely.

On the occasion above noted, the Apostle wrote to this cosmopolitan congregation of believers. In Rome, if anywhere, those evangelical principles which were of *universal* application would need the greatest emphasis. And the antithesis between law and gospel, as it then existed, far from being solely between Jewish and Gentile Christians, was the expression of a world-historical contrast and contest (of which the city of Rome itself still remains a witness). As the Apostle had not founded the church, he felt himself less influenced by special purposes than in writing to the Christians of Asia Minor and Greece; hence he not only omits all the polemical references which abound in the similar Epistle to the Galatians, but gives a much fuller doctrinal statement. His theme (chap. 1: 16, 17) is wide enough to touch every possible case among the recipients (including the dark problem of Jewish unbelief), and this leads him to an ethical conclusion (chap. 12: 1), that has application to any special cases he may have in mind. The various views respecting the analysis of the Epistle are, of course, affected by the theories held regarding the purpose.

### § 3. *Theme and Contents.*

As already indicated (Gen. Introd. § 4, p. xvii.), the theme of the Epistle is to be found in chap. 1: 16, 17: The gospel 'is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.' The reason it is such a power is that 'therein is revealed a righteousness of God (coming from Him) from faith unto faith,' in accordance with the Old Testament declaration, 'The righteous shall live by faith.' Strictly speaking, the main theme is not justification by faith,<sup>1</sup> as is usually held by those who

Pauline school; as if these required any such apology. A subordinate apologetic aim may be admitted, especially to account for chaps. 9-11; but even here the Apostle has in mind, not so much his apostolate to the Gentiles, as the entire problem respecting the relation of God's ancient people to the newly engrafted Gentile world. This explanation of God's plan of wisdom and mercy would be especially needed by Christians of Gentile origin.

<sup>1</sup> Compare Dr. Shedd: The doctrine of gratuitous justification — chapters 1-11: Necessity (chaps. 1-3: 20), nature (chaps. 3: 21-4: 25), effects (chaps. 5-8), and application (chaps. 9-11) of gratuitous justification.

think that the Apostle had a purely didactic purpose in writing the Epistle, but *salvation by God's power through faith, not through the law*. This salvation is wrought by means of a righteousness which comes from God to the believer; the first essential step is God's giving (imputing) this righteousness to believing sinners, so that they are accounted righteous by Him; but He makes them righteous by the same plan and power. The two are inseparable, and both are treated of in this Epistle as constituting God's power unto salvation. After the full discussion of this doctrinal theme (chaps. 1-11), the Apostle passes to exhortations and ethical applications (chaps. 12-16), which are but expansions of the leading practical inference (chap. 12: 1): 'I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.'

## CONTENTS.

Greeting and Introduction, chap. 1: 1-15. Theme (salvation free and universal), chap. 1: 16, 17.

- I. Doctrinal part: The gospel, for every one that believeth, is the power of God unto salvation; to the Jew first and also to the Greek; chaps. 1: 18-11.
- II. Practical part: Therefore offer your bodies to God, a living sacrifice of thanksgiving for this salvation; chaps. 12-16.
- I. Doctrinal part; chaps. 1: 18-11: 36.<sup>1</sup>
  1. *Every one needs* this power of God unto salvation, for all are *sinners*; 1: 18-3: 20; Gentiles (chap. 1: 18-32), and Jews (chaps. 2-3: 20).
  2. This power of God is to every one *that believeth*; chaps. 3: 21-4: 25. The plan is one of faith (chap. 3: 21-26). God is the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews (chap. 3: 27-31), and Abraham was justified by faith, being the father of

<sup>1</sup> Professor Godet, in substantial agreement with many others, divides the doctrinal part as follows:—

*Fundamental part*: 1: 18-5: 21.

The righteousness of faith without legal works.

*First Complementary part*: 6-8.

Sanctification without the law.

*Second complementary part*: 9-11.

The rejection of Israel.

believers, uncircumcised as well as circumcised (chap. 4: 1-25).

3. Thus *God actually saves men*; chaps. 5-8.

(a.) Reconciliation the result of justification (chap. 5: 1-11.)

(b.) Righteousness and life, through and in Christ, overbear the parallel, yet contrasted, case of sin and death through Adam (chap. 5: 12-21.)

(c.) This method of free salvation does not lead to sin, but to holiness (chaps. 6-8.)

i. Grace does not lead to sin (chap. 6);

ii. the law is in itself just and good, but powerless to sanctify (chap. 7);

iii. the work of the Spirit over against the failure of the law (chap. 8); nothing can separate from the love of Christ!

4. *The universality of this salvation*: This gospel is to the *Jew first*, and also to the *Gentile*: it has apparently failed to save the Jew, but only apparently (chaps. 9-11).

(a.) *God's sovereignty*: God's promise is not void (chap. 9: 1-29).

(b.) *Man's responsibility*: The Jews are excluded by their own unbelief (chaps. 9: 30-10: 21).

(c.) *The prospective solution*: God has not cast off His people, but overruled their unbelief for the salvation of the Gentiles, after which Israel shall be saved (chap. 11: 1-32).

(d.) Doxology in view of this mystery (chap. 11: 33-36).

II. Practical part (chaps. 12-16): Man's gratitude for the free salvation.

1. General exhortations (chaps. 12: 1-21; 13: 8-14).

2. Special discussions:

(a.) In regard to obedience to rulers (chap. 13: 1-7.)

(b.) In regard to scruples about eating meat and drinking wine, etc. (chaps. 14: 1-15: 13).

3. Conclusion (chaps. 15: 14-16: 27).

(a.) Personal explanations, as at the beginning (chap. 15: 14-33).

(b.) Messages and greetings to various persons (chap. 16: 1-16).

- (c.) Closing warnings, with greetings from various persons (chap. 16 : 17-24).  
(d.) Concluding Doxology (chap. 16 : 25-27).

#### § 4. *Time and Place of Composition.*

There is no reason to doubt the generally received opinion that this Epistle was written from *Corinth*, during the three months' stay in Achaia (Greece), mentioned in Acts 20 : 3. For, according to chap. 15 : 25, etc., at the time of writing the Apostle was about to go to Jerusalem with the offering for the poor, made by the churches of Macedonia and Achaia. At Corinth he had directed collections to be made; it was the largest city of Achaia; Phœbe, who took the letter, was from Cenchreæ, the sea-port of Corinth (chap. 16 : 1, 2); Gaius (chap. 16 : 23), his host, was probably a Corinthian (1 Cor. 1 : 14). Meyer suggests that the letter was written before the plot of the Jews (Acts 20 : 3), which changed the route of the Apostle. According to our view of the chronology, the date would be early in A. D. 58, since the departure for Jerusalem was made in due season to reach that city before Pentecost (Acts 20 : 16).

#### § 5. *Genuineness and Integrity of the Epistle.*

The Epistle was written by the Apostle Paul. The testimony of the ancient Church is unanimous; the internal evidence is equally strong, and few of the most destructive critics have ventured to assail its genuineness. From the very first, it was quoted by Christian writers, and even Marcion acknowledged it.

But its *integrity* has been opposed frequently, and in various ways, the chief doubt being respecting chaps. 15, 16. They were rejected by Marcion on doctrinal grounds, and in modern times by Baur. Others admit that Paul wrote them, but not as a part of the Epistle to the Romans. The main grounds for this position are the insertion of the concluding doxology (in some MSS.) at the close of chap. 14, and the long list of acquaintances at Rome, where Paul had not yet been, none of them named in the Epistles from Rome. Neither of these reasons are of great weight, while the theories that seek to account for the appending of the final chapters

are unsustained by any historical fact.<sup>1</sup> (See Excursus at the close of chap. 16). It may be added that the Greek text of this Epistle is remarkably free from important variations; even the very difficult critical question in chap. 5: 1, involves no point of doctrine. The most weighty passages have been preserved with wonderful accuracy.

### § 6. *Characteristics of the Epistle.*

The Epistle is the bulwark of the doctrines of sin and grace, the *Magna Charta* of the evangelical system against all Judaizing and Romanizing perversions. Luther calls it 'the chief part of the New Testament, and the perfect gospel;' Coleridge: 'the most profound work in existence;' Meyer: 'the grandest, boldest, most complete composition of Paul.' Godet terms it 'the cathedral of the Christian faith.' Owing to the character of the subject treated, it is full of difficulties; almost every chapter is a theological battlefield; but the leading truths are clear enough to those whose hearts are not crusted over by the legalism the Apostle so vigorously assails. This Epistle and that to the Galatians discuss the same fundamental doctrine, namely, justification by free grace through faith in Jesus Christ, with whom the believer enters into personal life-union. They differ, however: the latter is a personal defence, directly opposing the false teachers of legalism who were perverting a church founded by the Apostle himself; the former, written to

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Lightfoot (in Smith's *Bib. Dict.*) advocates the view 'that the letter was circulated at an early date (whether during the Apostle's lifetime or not it is idle to inquire) in two forms, both with and without the two last chapters.' This view he afterwards modifies: 'At some later period of his life . . . it occurred to the Apostle to give this letter a wider circulation. To this end he made two changes in it; he obliterated all mention of Rome in the opening paragraphs by slight alterations; and he cut off the two last chapters containing personal matters, adding at the same time a doxology, a termination to the whole.' See Professor Abbot's supplementary article (Romans) in Smith's *Bib. Dict.* On the other hand, Canon Farrar (*St. Paul*, ii. pp. 170, 171) advocates the view 'that chap. 16, in whole or in part, was addressed to Ephesus as a personal termination to the copy of the Roman Epistle, which could hardly fail to be sent to so important a church.' This is substantially the view of Renan, who thinks that our Epistle in chaps. 15, 16, is a collection of all the different conclusions addressed to the various churches that first received the encyclical letter. Weiss favors the view that chap. 16: 1-20 was a letter of recommendation for Phœbe, addressed to Ephesus, and afterwards incorporated into the Epistle to Rome, of which she was the bearer.

strangers, opposes the corrupt (and legalistic) tendencies of the human heart, by a fuller statement of God's power unto salvation. They supplement each other, and together furnish the immovable Scriptural basis for evangelical freedom in Christ, the best defence against the perversions of doctrine which have been sustained by the most rigid ecclesiasticism. Nor should it escape notice that these Epistles were addressed, in the one instance to Rome, and in the other to people of Keltic race (comp. Introduction to Galatians), the city and race at present most completely under the bondage of organized legalism. Moreover, as Godet admirably sets forth, the Epistle sheds light upon many other topics which are of permanent interest to thoughtful men.

As regards style, the Epistle to the Romans is characterized by strength, fulness, and warmth' (Tholuck), the latter qualities overbearing at times the perspicuity which we would expect from so powerful a writer, and which appears in the concluding chapters. Dean Alford notes the following peculiarities: (*a.*) insulating the one matter under discussion—up to a certain point; (*b.*) then introducing the objections; (*c.*) weaving these parenthetical objections into the main discussion; (*d.*) frequent and complicated antitheses; (*e.*) frequent plays upon words, which cannot always be reproduced in English; (*f.*) accumulation of prepositions; (*g.*) frequency and peculiarity of parenthetical passages. He also rightly calls attention to the emphatic position of words, and to the distinction of tenses. These are frequently lost sight of in A. V., but in the R. V., great care has been taken to indicate, when possible in an English form, these minute peculiarities. A greater energy as well as abruptness of style is noticeable in the earlier Epistles, when the Apostle was less wearied by his incessant labors and continued trials.

In the full vigor of his manhood, at the height of his Christian activity, this great Apostle wrote to the greatest city of the world this Epistle, which presents the truth he preached in the most symmetrical form. 'Although the Epistle to the Romans belongs, in the chronological order, in the middle of the Pauline Epistles, yet its primacy has been recognized in manifest opposition to the alleged primacy of the Roman bishop. The Epistle to the Romans,



in its Pauline type, opposes, by its doctrine of justification by faith without the works of the law, the system of Rome; so that even to-day it can be regarded as an Epistle especially directed "to the Roman."—Lange.

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# THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

TO THE

## ROMANS.

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### CHAPTER 1: 1-7.

#### *Address and Greeting.*

1 PAUL, a <sup>1</sup>servant of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bond-servant*.

### CHAPTER 1: 1-17.

#### ADDRESS, INTRODUCTION AND THEME.

Chapter I. contains two distinct parts: vers. 1-17 form the introductory portion of the Epistle; vers. 18-32 give the proof that the Gentiles need the gospel from the fact of their sinfulness exposing them to the wrath of God. (This statement is the first half of the first main division of the doctrinal part of the Epistle. See Introduction, § 3, and notes on vers. 16, 18.) We divide vers. 1-17 into three paragraphs (instead of two, as in the R. V.): vers. 1-7 contain the *address and greeting* (in an unusually full form); vers. 8-15 constitute the *Introduction* proper, since they give the occasion for the Apostle's writing to the Roman Christians; by an easy transition he then passes to the main theme of the Epistle, which is stated in ver. 16, and further explained in ver. 17.

#### *Address and Greeting, vers. 1-7.*

The Apostle conforms to the usage of his time, beginning his letters with his own name, followed by a designation of the persons addressed, to which a greeting is added. But he usually describes himself as related to Jesus Christ, indicates the character of those he addresses, and gives a distinctively Christian salutation. The most usual designation of himself is 'an Apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God' (so 2 Cor., Eph., Col., 2 Tim.); in 1 and 2 Thess., no designation is added; 'prisoner,' 'servant,' etc., occur in other Epistles. But here and in Galatians the description is more full, in view of the thoughts which are to follow. (Compare also the full designation in Tit. 1: 1-3.) He begins the address here by describing himself as 'a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle;' he then particularizes his relation to the gospel (ver. 1); but designing to treat quite fully of evangelical truth, he enlarges upon these relations, introducing: (1) the connection of the gospel with the Old Testament, ver. 2; (2) the divine-human Person of Christ, who is the subject

of this gospel, vers. 3, 4; (3) his call to the apostleship of the Gentiles (ver. 5), which gives him the right to address the Roman Christians, ver. 6. Then follows the usual apostolic greeting, ver. 7. The fulness of this address shows the importance which the Apostle attached to the fundamental thoughts of this Epistle, since they suggest themselves at the very outset, and are interwoven with what would ordinarily be merely the conventional beginning of a letter.

The greeting found in ver. 7 occurs in this form (with trifling variations) in most of Paul's letters. It is partly Greek, partly Hebrew, in its origin, but wholly Christian in its sense. (On the words 'grace' and 'peace,' see ver. 7.) The Pastoral Epistles (with the exception of Titus, according to the correct text) contain the form: 'grace, mercy and peace,' the word 'mercy' being probably derived from the Greek version of the priestly benediction, Num. 6: 25. The Apostle Peter in his Epistles, and the Apostle John in the Apocalypse, join together 'grace and peace' in their greetings, while in Jude 2 we find 'mercy, peace, and love.'

The whole section shows Paul to be a model for the Christian minister, in his humility and dignity, in the sense of dependence on the personal Lord Jesus Christ which underlies his authoritative utterances, as well as in his devotion to this great personal theme of the gospel which he so earnestly desires to preach everywhere.

Ver. 1. **Paul.** See *Gen. Introd.*, § 1.—**A servant of Jesus Christ.** The word 'servant' here means 'bond-servant' (the R. V. usually adds the literal sense in the margin), expressing the fact that Paul personally belonged to Jesus Christ, rather than the idea of service in His behalf. Another word conveys the latter sense. Any unpleasant thought connected with the former idea is removed by the character of the Master, Jesus Christ. This term of humility and dependence is the most honorable of all titles.—**Called to be an Apostle.** Here he simply asserts the fact of his apostolic dignity and authority; in writing to the Galatians, he was forced to defend his apostleship (comp. the enlarged description of the word in Gal. 1: 1). He received the call on the way to Damascus (Acts 9: 15; 26: 17); his call coincided with his conversion; it was confirmed in the temple at Jerusalem (Acts 9: 28; 22: 17-21). His setting apart at Antioch (Acts 13: 2, 3) was not the call, but a formal recognition of the call on the part of the Church there, and for a special mission. The title is an official one; and while it might at first refer to any messenger, in the early Church it was soon restricted to the Twelve and to Paul, as chosen witnesses of the resurrection, selected to lay the foundation of the Christian Church. Paul was not one of the Twelve, but represented the independent apostolate of the Gentiles (Gal. 2: 9). As preachers and missionaries, the Apostles must have successors; but as inspired and authoritative witnesses for Christ, called *directly* by him for the *whole* world, they have none.—**Separated**, or, 'set apart.' This explains the apostleship. Paul was selected from the world, singled out, consecrated to, and destined for the gospel service. In one sense this took place at his birth (comp. Gal. 1: 15, where the same word occurs): but the reference here is probably to the call to be an Apostle, especially as the tense used is not

2 apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which he promised afore <sup>1</sup> by his prophets in the holy scriptures,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *through*.

the same as in Galatians, but points to a past act with a continuous result.—**Unto the gospel of God.** This was that for which he was set apart. The gospel is ‘of God,’ having Him as its author; it is about Christ (vers. 3, 4).

Ver. 2. **Which he promised afore.** The parenthesis of the A. V. is unnecessary, for the whole passage is closely connected. It must be God’s gospel, for He had already promised it, and this thought would have force with the Gentile Christians as well as the Jews.—**By his prophets.**—In the New Testament the revelation is always said to be made ‘by’ (ὑπὸ) God, ‘through’ (διὰ) the prophets. The ‘prophets’ are not here distinguished from the other Old Testament writers.—**In the holy Scriptures.**—The article is wanting in the original, but this can scarcely alter the accepted sense. The Greek-speaking Jews probably used the phrase as a proper noun, as in the case of the word ‘law.’ The omission of the article, in such usage, does not imply any indefinite or general meaning. The reader would understand that the whole Old Testament was meant. ‘A slight stress is thus thrown upon the epithet “holy.” It is not merely “in certain books which go by the name of holy scriptures,” but “in certain writings the character of which is holy.” They are “holy,” as containing the promises referred to in the text, and others like them’ (Sanday). In fact, the entire revelation is one organic system of types and prophecies pointing to Christ; John 5: 39. The gospel, Paul implies, though new, is yet old.

Ver. 3. **Concerning his Son.** The punctuation of the A. V. connects this with the word ‘gospel’ (ver. 1), but it may be joined with ver. 2: God’s previous promise in the Old Testament was concerning His Son. That promise was fulfilled in the gospel. In any case it is fairly implied that the ‘Son’ existed in a peculiar relation to God before the historical manifestations described in the two parallel clauses which follow. These clauses each contain three contrasted members: (1) was born, (2) of the seed of David, (3) according to the flesh; (1) was declared to be the Son of God with power, (2) by resurrection of the dead, (3) according to the spirit of holiness.—**Who was born**, or, literally ‘became.’ Though He was the Son of God, it was necessary for the fulfilment of the Messianic promises that He should become *man*, hence He was born.—**Of the seed of David.** This too was in fulfilment of the promise, whether we refer it to His being the son of Mary, or the legal son of Joseph; but the former seems the more probable reference.—**According to the flesh**, *i. e.*, according to His human nature, or, descent. The word ‘flesh’ is also used of our sinful nature, but that sense is excluded here, since He appeared ‘in the likeness of the flesh of sin’ (see on chap. 8: 2).

3 concerning his Son, who was born of the seed of Da-  
4 vid according to the flesh, who was <sup>1</sup>declared *to be* the

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *determined*.

Nor does the phrase refer to the body alone, or to the body and soul, distinguished from the spirit. 'Were He a mere man, it had been enough to say that He was of the seed of David; but as He is more than man, it was necessary to limit His descent from David to His human nature' (Hodge). So Weiss, substantially; Meyer is somewhat obscure in his view.

Ver. 4. **Who was declared to be the Son of God.** The clause is strictly parallel with 'who was born.' (The word 'and' is interpolated in the A. V.) The word rendered 'declared' has been much discussed. It first meant to bound, define, determine (see margin), etc. In this case a mistake of the Latin Vulgate has confounded it with the word meaning 'predestined.' The sense 'constituted,' in so far as that implies that the Sonship began at the resurrection, is an impossible one. The two allowable meanings are: (1) instated or installed; (2) declared, manifested, etc. They differ in this respect that (1) points to what God did, and (2) to the human recognition or proof of the Sonship of Christ. The former seems to be the more natural sense, but the latter is usually accepted. In neither case is there any suggestion that Christ *became* the Son of God in consequence of the resurrection, although the *human* nature of Christ was then exalted, and made partaker of the glory which eternally belonged to the Son, John 17: 5. 'For although Christ was already the Son of God before the creation of the world, and as such was *sent* (chap. 8: 3; Gal. 4: 4), nevertheless there was needed a fact, by means of which He should receive, after the humiliation that began with His birth (Phil. 2: 7 sqq.), *instating* into the rank and dignity of His divine Sonship; whereby also, as its necessary *consequence* with a view to the knowledge and conviction of men, He was legitimately established as the Son' (Meyer).—**With** (lit., 'in') **power.** This may be joined with 'declared,' setting forth this act as an exhibition of Divine power. It should not be taken adverbially as equivalent to 'powerfully.' Others prefer to join the phrase with 'Son of God,' thus contrasting the majesty and power of the risen Son of God with the weakness of His human nature. In any case, the whole phrase 'declared *to be* the Son of God with power,' is to be taken together as in contrast with 'was born' (ver. 3).—**According to the spirit of holiness.** This is evidently in contrast with 'according to the flesh,' and must set forth that side of the person of Christ wherein He differs absolutely from those who are only human. This would exclude a reference to the personal Holy Spirit, who is nowhere designated by this phrase, also to the human spirit of Christ as distinct from His body and soul (see on ver. 3). God is a Spirit, hence the divine nature of the Incarnate Son of God is Spirit. Of this 'spirit' the characteristic quality

Son of God <sup>1</sup>with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead; *even* Jesus <sup>5</sup>Christ our Lord, through whom we received grace and apostleship, unto obedience <sup>2</sup>of faith among all

<sup>1</sup> Or, *in*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *to the faith*.

is 'holiness.' We reject the view which explains 'holiness' as 'sanctification.'—**By the resurrection of the dead.** Literally, 'out of resurrection of dead.' 'Out of' is here equivalent to 'by means of,' and not to 'after' or 'since,' as some have imagined. 'Resurrection,' though without the article, refers to the historical fact by virtue of which was accomplished the exaltation of the Son of God, who had previously humbled Himself to be born. Hence it seems best to insert the article in English. 'Of the dead' is probably not identical with 'from the dead' (as in A. V.), but points to the resurrection of Christ as the fact which implies and guarantees the final resurrection of all believers.—**Jesus Christ our Lord.** 'Having given this description of the person and dignity of the Son of God, very man and very God, he now identifies this divine person with Jesus Christ, the Lord and Master of Christians, the historical object of their faith, and (see words following) the Appointer of himself to the apostolic office' (Alford). 'Jesus' is the personal name; 'Christ,' the official name; 'our Lord,' taking up the word applied to Jehovah in the Septuagint, presents Him as the supreme Lord of the New Dispensation, the personal Master and King of all believers. The full phrase always has a solemn and triumphant tone, and here serves not only to exalt Christ, but to express the high dignity of the apostolic office (vers. 1, 5), the leading idea in the address.

Ver. 5. **Through whom,** *i. e.* 'Jesus Christ our Lord,' which is placed in its proper position in the R. V., and separated from this verse only by a comma. Everywhere Paul speaks of himself as called by God to be an Apostle ('by the will of God,' 1 Cor. 1: 1, etc.), but called through Jesus Christ, who had spoken to him on the way to Damascus (Acts 9: 4, 5), and subsequently (Acts 22: 17-21).—**We received.** The plural is used, although the context shows that he refers to himself alone. Such a custom was very common among Greek authors.—**Grace and apostleship.** 'Grace,' in general; and 'apostleship,' in particular. The latter was indeed the special object and highest evidence of the former; but the two ideas are not to be confounded. Without the grace so fully bestowed upon him, he could not have been an Apostle (comp. Eph. 3: 8); but his apostleship was a special gift. As suggested above (see ver. 1), the Apostles, as such, have no successors; yet the connection of the words, 'grace and apostleship,' implies that a gift of grace must underlie all genuine service in the church, that without this there is certainly no call to the ministry.—**Unto obedience of faith.** This might be paraphrased: 'in order to produce obedience to faith.' 'The faith'

6 the nations, for his name's sake: among whom are ye  
7 also, called *to be* Jesus Christ's: to all that are in  
Rome, beloved of God, called *to be* saints: Grace to

(R. V. marg.) is misleading, for it suggests a body of doctrine, whereas 'faith' in the New Testament, well-nigh invariably, means 'believing,' not what is believed. On the other hand, the two ideas of 'obedience' and 'faith' must not be confounded, by explaining that obedience consists in faith (Calvin, Weiss), or has faith as its controlling principle. For 'faith' is that to which the obedience is rendered. The end of his apostleship was that people might submit themselves to faith, become believers; this would result in a new and true obedience, but of this he is not now speaking. That 'Jesus Christ our Lord' was the object of this faith is clear enough.—**Among all the nations**, or, 'Gentiles,' as the word is usually translated, comp. ver. 13. The only objection to rendering it thus in this instance is the probability that the Jews may be included, since he addresses himself to all the Christians at Rome (vers. 6, 7), some of whom were Jews; but usually Paul emphasizes his apostleship to the Gentiles. The words qualify 'unto obedience of faith.'—**For his name's sake.** For the glorifying of His name. Comp. Acts 9: 16; 15: 26; 21: 13; 2 Thess. 1: 12. The end of his apostleship was that men in all the nations might believe, and the end of their believing was the glory of Christ in whom they believed. Hence this was the end of his preaching. In the 'name' of Christ is summed up all that He was, did, and suffered. The expression is borrowed from the Hebrew.

Ver. 6. **Among whom are ye also.** To prepare for the address he says that his mission for the glory of Christ's name is to them also; they are included among those for whom he received his apostleship.—**Called to be Jesus Christ's.** They were not called by Jesus Christ, but called to be His, since the call of believers is always referred to God. The article is wanting before 'called,' hence the comma after 'also.' 'Called' may here mean effectually called, but 'called' and 'chosen,' or 'elect,' are frequently distinguished in the New Testament; Matt. 22: 14.

Ver. 7. **To all that are in Rome.** This is the address proper, indicating the recipients of the letter. The Christians at Rome of whatever nationality, are viewed as one community, though not addressed as a 'church.' The city was so large that they may have worshipped in various domestic congregations (comp. chap. 16: 5). But it does not follow that the organizations were imperfect; for while Paul in all the Epistles written before this time (Thessalonians, Galatians, Corinthians) addresses the churches, in his subsequent letters to the fully organized Christian congregations at Ephesus, Philippi, and Colossæ, he does not.—**Beloved of God.** Because reconciled to God through Christ (chaps. 5: 5; 8: 39).—**Called to be saints.** Just as Paul was called to be an Apostle (ver. 1), implying that they



you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER 1: 8-15.

### *Introduction (Occasion of the Epistle).*

8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for

actually were what they were called to be. 'Saints' refers first of all to consecration to God, and then, as a consequence, to holiness. This must always be borne in mind.—**Grace to you, and peace.** This is the Christian greeting. The word rendered 'grace' is akin to the common Greek salutation, while 'peace' is the Hebrew salutation. The two, as here lifted up into Christian usage, are related to each other, as cause and effect: the one is God's feeling toward us; the other the result in us. The connection shows what a profound sense is attached to both. The greeting seems to be an earnest wish or prayer, rather than an authoritative benediction, but on this point there is room for discussion. There is no verb in the original, and to this usage the A. V. conforms here, but not elsewhere.—**From God our Father.** This refers to the new and special relation which Christians hold to God, as adopted sons (Gal. 4: 5; Rom. 8: 15).—**And the Lord Jesus Christ.** This joining of Christ with God our Father as the personal source of 'grace and peace' to us, is a strong incidental proof of the divinity of Christ. No one who believed the Hebrew Scriptures would thus associate the eternal Jehovah with a mere man. At the same time, we learn elsewhere that the Father is the Author, and Jesus Christ the mediator and procurer of these blessings.

This section assumes the fundamental facts of Christianity. Written less than thirty years after the death of Christ, to a body of believers far removed from Judæa, it is itself sufficient evidence that the Gospels contain history, and not myths or fictions, that the doctrines peculiar to Christianity were proclaimed and believed from the first, and are not the inventions of after ages. Paul goes further, and affirms that the main facts were promised in the Old Testament. The Person of Christ, the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the universal Lordship of Jesus Christ, these are the facts. Faith in Him, loyal allegiance to Him, universal proclamation of Him—all for His glory—this is the human response to the facts of salvation. This was the substance of Christianity in the first century, and this its substance now. Such a gospel is imperishable, and the letter which treats of it most systematically is not for one place and one age alone, but of universal interest and of permanent authority, even as this distinctively Christian greeting is as precious to us now as to the Roman Christians then.

### *Introduction (Occasion of the Epistle), vers. 8-15.*

After the full and formal address and greeting, the Apostle, as usual, begins with thanksgiving on behalf of the Christians addressed. (In Galatians a rebuke takes

you all, <sup>1</sup>that your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *because.*

the place of the thanksgiving.) Here Paul gives thanks, and that through Jesus Christ, for the extended fame of the faith of the Christians at Rome (ver. 8), and then mentions his constant prayer for them (ver. 9), and especially his prayerful desire to come to them (ver. 10), for their common edification (vers. 11, 12). His unfulfilled purpose to come that he might have fruit among them also (ver. 13), grows out of his obligation to preach the gospel to all men (ver. 14), hence his readiness to preach to them also (ver. 15). The non-fulfilment of this desire and purpose occasioned the Epistle; the main thought of which immediately follows (vers. 16, 17).

Ver. 8. **First.** There is no corresponding 'secondly,' an omission not uncommon in Paul's writings. Comp. chap. 3: 2, where the R. V. renders: 'first of all.'—**I thank my God.** (See introductory note.) 'The Apostle pursues the natural course of first placing himself, so to speak, in relation with his readers; and his first point of contact with them is gratitude for their participation in Christianity' (De Wette). There is a touching emphasis in the phrase 'my God,' with its personal appropriation and corresponding sense of personal obligation. In this expression he sums up 'all those experiences he had *personally* made' (Godet) of the covenant faithfulness of God.—**Through Jesus Christ.** The thanksgiving is through Christ; comp. Heb. 3: 15, and similar passages. Jesus Christ is also the medium through whom came the blessings for which he is thankful; but the other thought is the prominent one.—**For you all.** The thanksgiving was concerning them, or, on their behalf.—**That.** The word also means 'because;' but here the two senses are practically the same.—**Your faith is proclaimed,** declared among Christians. That the Roman Church was comparatively unknown to unbelievers, even to the Jews at Rome, appears from Acts 28: 22. The praiseworthy character of their faith may be inferred from the thanksgiving.—**Throughout the whole world.** 'A popular hyperbole; but how accordant with the position of the church in *that* city, toward which the eyes of the whole world were turned!' (Meyer.)

Ver. 9. **For.** This introduces a solemn proof of his thanksgiving.—**God is my witness.** Such appeals to God are not uncommon in Paul's writings. God only could know what his habit in secret prayer was. The fact was important, since he had labored so widely and yet not visited them. This might seem like ignorance or forgetfulness of them.—**Whom I serve in my spirit.** This adds strength to the solemn asseveration. The word translated 'serve' is used in the Septuagint of priestly service, and probably retains some such force here. He renders true service, not in the temple, but in his 'spirit.' 'Spirit' is the highest part of man's nature, and in passages like this the refe-

how unceasingly I make mention of you, always in  
 10 my prayers making request, if by any means now at  
 length I may be prospered<sup>1</sup> by the will of God to  
 11 come unto you. For I long to see you, that I may  
 impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *in*.

rence is to the human spirit, not so much as a mode of being, as the sphere of the working of the Holy Spirit. (Comp. Weiss, and Excur- sus at the close of chap. 7.) Meyer says: 'in my moral self-consciousness, which is the living inner sphere of that service.' But it is a regenerated moral self-consciousness (so Godet).—**In the gospel of his Son.** The gospel concerning His Son (comp. ver. 3). This is the sphere of the service from another point of view; his service is not the performance of a ritual, but the proclamation of the gospel, the good tidings about the Son of God. Notice here and throughout that the gospel is spoken of, not as the gospel of Jesus, but as the gospel of God, the gospel of Christ, the gospel of His Son. Paul served God by telling the good tidings of the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord (vers. 1-5).—**How unceasingly.** The R. V. correctly indicates that it is the mode, rather than the simple fact, or the degree, which is brought out.—**I make mention of you.** Notice the more correct punctuation of the R. V. The remembrance is not a mere recollection, but an active recalling of them.—**Always in my prayers,** or, at my prayers, *i. e.*, always when engaged in prayer.

Ver. 10. **Making request.** How unceasingly he remembers them is evident from this constant petition, the purport of which is next expressed.—**If by any means,** etc. Instead of saying: 'that I may come,' the Apostle uses this conditional form, which indicates both his earnest desire and his submission of it to God's will.—**Now at length,** on some occasion. This implies both earnest wish and long delay (both of which are expressed in ver. 13), and also the possibility that he might be delayed much longer. Three years intervened before his desire was granted.—**I may be prospered.** The A. V. follows the incorrect rendering of the Vulgate. The word means to succeed, to have the good fortune; the idea of journeying, which belonged to it originally, was lost in the usage of that time.—**By the will of God.** This belongs to 'prospered,' not to 'come.'

Ver. 11. **For I long to see you.** This longing was the reason of his constant petition. There is no needless repetition, since this verse and what follows show that thanksgiving, remembrance, petition, and longing, all grow out of his desire to preach that gospel, which he is about to set forth in this Epistle.—**Some spiritual gift.** 'Spiritual' means, wrought by the Holy Spirit, and not simply belonging to the inner life. Apparently, Paul never uses the word in the latter sense. 'Gift' does not refer to miraculous gifts, but to all gifts of grace. 'Some,' expresses 'not only the Apostle's modesty, but

12 may be established ; that is, that I with you may be  
 comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith, both  
 13 yours and mine. And I would not have you ignorant,  
 brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto  
 you (and I was hindered hitherto) that I might have

an acknowledgment that the Romans were already in the faith, together with an intimation that something was still wanting in them' (Lange).—**To the end**, etc. This was the object of the desired impartation of spiritual gifts ; they were not desired for their own sake.—**Be established**, or, 'strengthened.' The agent would be the Holy Spirit (comp. 'spiritual') ; Paul was but the instrument (see next verse).

Ver. 12. **That is**, etc. 'By this modifying explanation, subjoined with humility, and expressed in a delicate complimentary manner, Paul guards himself, in the presence of a church to which he was still a stranger, from the possible appearance of presumption and of forming too low an estimate of the Christian position of his readers' (Meyer).—**I with you may be comforted in you**. The phrase is difficult to translate ; since in the original there is a compound verb which means 'comforted with,' *i. e.*, at the same time with, and also an added phrase, which means 'among you,' lit., 'in you.' We prefer 'among you,' and explain : That he might be comforted, *i. e.*, encouraged and helped, as these ideas are included in the New Testament use of the word, at the same time when they were, namely, when by the fulfilment of his purpose, he should be 'among them.' The literal sense 'in you' (R. V.) indicates that the comfort was found in them.—**Each of us**, etc. The rendering of the R. V. has been for some time generally accepted. This turn of the thought indicates that their faith is the same, that they can, therefore, help and comfort one another ; the closing expression shows tact and modesty. One can scarcely fail to remark how the tone of Paul differs from that of the Roman Popes.

Ver. 13. **And I would not have you ignorant** (comp. chap. 11 : 25). The phrase lays stress on what is said. The progress of thought is natural. Paul had expressed his prayerful longing to see them (vers. 9-12), he now tells them that this longing had not been inactive ; it had frequently led to a definite purpose to visit them.—**Brethren**. This affectionate address agrees well with the fraternal tone of ver. 12.—**Oftentimes I purposed**. In his frequent visits to Greece such a purpose would readily be formed (comp. chap. 15 : 23).—**And was hindered hitherto**. This is a parenthetical explanation, introduced by 'and,' not 'but.' The word 'let' (A. V.) is an instance of entire reversal of meaning in English usage. The hindrances are not specified ; but we infer from chap. 15 : 20-24, that he felt it to be his first duty to preach where the gospel had not yet been proclaimed. At the same time, his necessary journeys to Jerusalem, and

some fruit in you also, even as in the rest of the Gen-  
14 tiles. I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians,  
15 both to the wise and to the foolish. So, as much as

the task of organizing the Gentile churches, of correcting their errors (comp. Galatians), of allaying dissensions (comp. Corinthians), filled up his time. It is nowhere hinted that he was forbidden to preach there.—**That I might have some fruit.** The main thought is here resumed. The figure is quite common. The 'fruit' is the harvest to be gathered and presented to God. Hence it is not Paul's reward, or the result of his labors merely, but the good works produced among the Roman Christians, as fruit unto God (comp. ver. 11). The conversion of others is not alluded to.—**In** (or, 'among') **you also.** The literal sense would emphasize the internal character of the fruit-bearing; but 'among,' which is a frequent sense of the preposition, is, on the whole, to be preferred.—**In** (or, 'among') **the rest of the Gentiles.** In ver. 5, the word is rendered 'nations,' but here the reference to 'Gentiles' is more marked, since there is a marked hint of his special mission as Apostle to the Gentiles, carried out in the next verse.

Ver. 14. **I am debtor.** 'Paul regards the divine obligation of office, received through Christ (ver. 5), as the undertaking of a *debt*, which he has to discharge by preaching the gospel among all Gentile nations. Comp. in reference to this subject, Acts 26: 17 f.; Gal. 2: 7; 1 Cor. 9: 16' (Meyer). Until he had fruit among the Romans, as among the rest of the Gentiles (ver. 13), this debt was not paid.—**To Greeks and to Barbarians.** The Greeks called all other peoples 'Barbarians'; the word having reference to the strange, unintelligible language. It became a term of reproach, because the Greeks, with their pride of race and culture, and the Romans, with their pride of power, looked down upon other nations. The Romans, according to the usage of those days, were not counted among the 'Barbarians,' but the Apostle probably does not class them here at all, for at Rome were representatives of all nations and all shades of culture and ignorance. He is debtor to all, whatever may be the distinction of language or race. The Jews are left out, because he is speaking of his debt to the Gentiles.—**Both to the wise and to the foolish.** This expresses the difference of natural intelligence and cultivation in every nation; it is not a repetition of the previous clause. The article is omitted in the original, and is not necessary in English; 'unwise' (A. V.) suggests a verbal correspondence which does not exist in the Greek. 'Foolish' is too strong and contemptuous. The two pairs together 'are used, apparently, merely as comprehending *all Gentiles*, whether considered in regard of race or of intellect; and are placed here certainly not without a prospective reference to the universality of guilt, and need of the gospel, which he is presently about to prove existed in the Gentile world' (Alford).

Ver. 15. **So, i. e.,** in accordance with this position of debtor (ver.

in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome.

### CHAPTER 1: 16, 17.

#### *The Theme of the Epistle.*

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the

14). Other explanations are less satisfactory.—**As much as in me is**, or, ‘as far as in me lies.’ The phrase is a strong one, as if to say: ‘As far as it depends on me, I am anxious to come and preach to you, but my will is subject to the will of God, who may have decreed it otherwise;’ comp. vers. 10, 13.—**I am ready**. This is a correct paraphrase of a difficult Greek expression.—**To preach the gospel**. One word in the original, to evangelize.—**To you also that are in Rome**. The Christians in Rome are meant here, as throughout. The gospel, which they had already heard from others, he was ready to preach to them, that he might have fruit among them also (ver. 13). To refer it to unconverted Romans is incorrect, both because of the use of ‘you’ in what precedes, and because his readiness to preach this gospel to those who had already received it is the warrant for *writing it* to believers. Emphasis rests upon ‘you also in Rome.’ It was the capital of the world; even there he would not be ‘ashamed of the gospel’ (ver. 16). ‘Paul subsequently attained the object of his wishes, though not according to human purposes, but according to the counsel of God: first as a prisoner, and last as a martyr’ (Lange). The very same power is required to make men missionaries as to make them martyrs. ‘In the former section our spirits bowed before one who stood so high in the service of so great a master. But now the ambassador of Christ comes to us as one like ourselves. Across the waters which roll between him and us, we hear a brother’s voice and see a brother’s face’ (Beet).

#### *The Theme of the Epistle, vers. 16, 17.*

(The close connection with ver. 15 justifies the R. V. in joining these verses with the preceding paragraph. They are placed by themselves here to bring out more fully their peculiar relation to the Epistle as a whole.)

Paul is ready to preach at Rome also, because he is not ashamed of the gospel; and he is not ashamed of the gospel, because of its character (ver. 16). The whole Epistle, to the end of chap. 11, is an expansion of the latter part of ver. 16. The gospel is to ‘every one,’ for every one needs it (chap. 1: 18—3: 2); it is ‘to every one that believeth,’ for this is the one way (chaps. 3: 21—4: 25); it is ‘God’s power unto salvation,’ for thus salvation is accomplished (chaps. 5: 1—8: 39); it is ‘to the Jew first, and also to the Greek,’ for the rejection of it by the Jews is but temporary (chaps. 9—11.)

In ver. 17 it is further explained how the gospel is ‘God’s power unto salvation.’ It is a revelation of God’s ‘righteousness’ (of a righteousness coming from Him), and

power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

that too by faith, as had already been set forth in the Old Testament. These verses therefore contain the fundamental truths of God's plan of salvation.

Ver. 16. **For I am not ashamed.** This gives the reason for his being ready to preach at Rome also (ver. 15), and forms an easy transition to the statement which follows. Rome, the metropolis of the heathen world, with all its pride of power, presented a field, where, if anywhere, one might be tempted to be ashamed of the gospel which centred in a Person whom Roman soldiers had crucified. Comp. Gal. 6: 14, and chap. 5: 2.—**Of the gospel.** The message itself which he proclaims, not the work of proclaiming it. The word gospel (evangelium) means the good tidings of salvation by Jesus Christ.' Hence it is not merely a set of ideas, or a code of morals, but certain facts which are told that men may believe on Him in whom they centre (vers. 3, 4), and thus believing live through and in Him. The reference to Christ is so obvious that the phrase 'of Christ' was added. It is to be omitted, according to the testimony of the mass of ancient authorities. Paul knew no other gospel than the gospel of (*i. e.*, about) Christ; comp. Gal. 1: 6-9.—**For.** The reason for not being ashamed is the nature of the gospel.—**The power of God**, or, 'God's power.' The article is not found in the Greek, but the idea is made definite by the word 'God's.' It comes from Him, belongs to Him, in and through it He works efficaciously. 'By awaking repentance, faith, comfort, love, peace, joy, courage in life and death, hope, etc., the gospel manifests itself as *power*, as a mighty potency, and that *of God*, whose revelation and work the gospel is' (Meyer). Writing to Rome, the city of worldly power, he calls the gospel God's power; writing to Corinth, the city of worldly wisdom, he calls the gospel God's wisdom (1 Cor. 2: 7, etc.).—**Unto salvation.** This includes both redemption from sin and positive privilege; a share in the eternal glory of the Messiah's kingdom. 'Salvation' includes more than moral improvement or continual happiness; it is, on its positive side, the equivalent of 'life,' in its full New Testament sense.—**To every one**, not to the Jew alone (see next clause). The subsequent argument (vers. 18-3: 20) shows that every one needs this power unto salvation; guilt being universal.—**Believeth.** This is the subjective condition of the gospel salvation; faith lays hold of what the gospel presents. There may be a contrast to Jewish legalism,—as in the subsequent discussion (chap. 3: 21-4: 25). Comp. ver. 17.—**To the Jew first.** First in time, but including more than this 'First, in having a prior claim, as the covenanted people of God: first, therefore, in the season of its offer, but not in the condition of its recipient *after* its acceptance' (Wordsworth). In chaps. 9-11 this priority of the Jews is discussed in view of the general rejection of the gospel by that people.—**And also to the Greek.** 'Greek' is here equivalent to

17 For therein is revealed a righteousness of God <sup>1</sup>by\*

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *from* \* For *by* read *from* and omit marginal rendering.—*Am. Com.*

‘Gentile;’ comp. Acts 14: 1; and 1 Cor. 10: 32, where the A. V. translates ‘Gentiles.’ Greek and Barbarian (ver. 14), was a *national* distinction used by the Greeks; Jew and Greek, a *religious* one used by the Jews; in both cases including all mankind.

Ver. 17. **For.** The proof of ver. 16, especially of the assertion that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation,—**Therein**; in the gospel.—**A righteousness of God.** The word ‘righteous,’ so frequent in the Old Testament, is used of conformity to law, equivalent to holy, perfect. It is applied absolutely to God alone, and the entire family of familiar terms has a *religious* significance. ‘Righteousness,’ when used of man, means conformity to the holy will and law of God, as the ultimate standard of right; when used of God, it expresses one of His attributes, essentially the same with His holiness and goodness, as manifested in His dealings with His creatures, especially with men. Closely allied with these words is another, meaning to declare or pronounce one righteous, expressed in English by the word ‘justify,’ derived from the Latin equivalent of ‘righteous.’ It is unfortunate that the correspondence cannot be preserved. In this verse ‘a righteousness of God’ in itself, might mean: (1) a righteousness which belongs to God; (2) a righteousness which comes from God; (3) a righteousness which He approves. But the discussion in chaps. 3, 4, leaves no room for doubting that the correct meaning is (2), a righteousness of which God is the author, and that too His free gift, so that it is *reckoned to the believer* (chap. 3: 21–25). But while this is to be insisted upon as the prominent thought, it must be borne in mind: (a) That neither here nor elsewhere is ‘righteousness’ exactly equivalent to ‘justification,’ or, God’s method of justification. (b) That this revelation of ‘righteousness from God,’ by imputation, grows out of the righteousness which belongs to God; in the gospel He reveals His own righteousness by revealing that He is ‘just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus’ (chap. 3: 26); nothing shows His righteousness so plainly as the death of Christ for our Redemption. (c) Hence this ‘righteousness from God,’ freely reckoned to the believer, necessarily leads to a change of character in the sinner who believes, so that the righteousness imputed ‘becomes righteousness inwrought.’ This is necessarily the case: because when God accounts a man righteous, He is pledged to make him so: because faith which lays hold on this imputed righteousness brings the justified man into living fellowship with Jesus Christ, who gives him the Holy Spirit; and because on the human side this method of pardon and reconciliation affords motives for well-doing, which that Holy Spirit uses to fulfil the pledge God makes of sanctifying the believer. It has been found that a denial of the fundamental sense (righteousness from God, imputed by Him) leads to a practical obscuration of both the other senses; while God has been proven righteous and man made righteous by the mainte-



faith unto faith: as it is written, But the righteous shall live <sup>1</sup> by faith.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *from*.

nance of the truths that in the gospel He reveals a righteousness which He puts to the account of the believer.—**Revealed.** The present tense indicates continued action: it is being revealed, it is continuously proclaimed and made known. In the Old Testament it was promised and prepared for, but first made known fully in the gospel.—**From faith.** The rendering ‘by’ (Eng. Com.) suggests an unlikely sense, and was probably adopted to show that the Greek preposition is the same as in the last clause. The entire phrase **from faith unto faith** is to be joined with ‘revealed,’ not with ‘righteousness.’ The righteousness is revealed ‘from faith,’ as the starting-point, and ‘to faith’ as its aim, continually producing new faith. This is substantially the generally accepted explanation. (It is improper to refer ‘from faith’ to God’s faithfulness.) The gospel makes known constantly that faith on Christ is the subjective cause of the righteousness from God, the condition of its imputation, the organ which appropriates it; and it further makes known that thus faith is produced; faith is the beginning and end, the vital principle is ever the same.’ ‘Faith,’ in the New Testament, has well-nigh invariably the subjective sense, not what is believed, but *believing*. It includes knowledge and belief, assent and surrender, appropriation and application; and hence cannot be limited to a purely intellectual credence.—**As it is written.** By this passage (Hab. 2: 4), Paul would show that this revelation of righteousness from God, from *faith* and to *faith*, is in accordance with the Old Testament Scripture, and hence according to the divine plan.—**The righteous.** The rendering ‘just’ obliterates the verbal correspondence with ‘righteousness.’ Paul here refers to one who possesses the righteousness from God. If this were not the case the quotation would lack point.—**Shall live by faith;** or, ‘the righteous by faith shall live.’ The former view of ‘the connection agrees better with the original prophecy of Habakkuk, where ‘faith’ is equivalent to ‘faithfulness’ (both having the same fundamental idea of trust in God). The latter, however, is accepted by some, on the ground that Paul, in this case, is seeking to prove from the Old Testament not a life by faith, but the revelation of righteousness by faith. (The marginal note of the R. V. indicates that ‘by’ here is the same word as that rendered ‘from’ in the preceding clause.) In any case, Paul clearly holds that if the righteous man truly lives, it is because he has been accounted righteous by faith; comp. Gal. 3: 11, where the same passage is quoted. In favor of the connection ‘live by faith,’ we may urge the greater emphasis which falls upon ‘by faith,’ in accordance with the order of the Greek. We add a paraphrase of these important verses: To you Romans also I am ready to preach, for even in your imperial city I would not be

## CHAPTER 1: 18-32.

*The Sinfulness of the Gentiles.*

18 For <sup>1</sup>the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,

<sup>1</sup> Or, a wrath.

ashamed of the gospel. How can I be ashamed of it before any sinful man, since it is that through and in which God's power works so as to *save* men, all of whom are sinful, and any one of whom can be thus saved when he believes—whether he be of God's ancient people, to whom it was first preached, or of the Gentiles. It is God's power unto salvation because it brings to sinful men righteousness which comes from God, given freely by Him, so that they are accounted righteous (and made righteous because He so accounts them); and this, not by any impossible way, but revealed from faith as its starting-point and faith as its terminal point: whatever of righteousness man has comes by faith. And this was God's way, predicted already in the Old Testament, for He there says: The man who is declared righteous lives by *faith* (or, the man who is righteous by *faith* lives).

## DOCTRINAL PART. CHAPTERS I: 18—XI.

## CHAPTERS 1: 18—3: 20.

## I. UNIVERSAL NEED.

Having asserted that the gospel is God's power unto salvation to every one that believeth, whether Jew or Greek, the Apostle proceeds to show that all men are sinners, and therefore can be saved only by this method. He first (1) describes the sinfulness of the Gentiles (chap. 1: 18-32), and then (2) proves that the Jews are equally in need of this salvation (chaps. 2-3: 20). This proof of the universality of sinfulness establishes *directly* the propriety of using the phrase 'every one' in ver. 16, while it *indirectly* proves that 'God's power' is needed, and that only he that 'believeth' can be saved. Since all are sinners they cannot save themselves, and must be saved by faith.

1. *The Sinfulness of the Gentiles*, vers. 18-32.

This fearful, yet truthful, description of the moral decay of the Gentile world is not introduced abruptly. In ver. 17 the Apostle had declared that righteousness from God was revealed by faith; he now proves this (and thus the position of ver. 16) by the fact that God's wrath is revealed against unrighteousness. This is, indeed, a revelation of God's punitive righteousness; but it shows that sinful men can be saved only through the gospel. Ver. 18 suggests the thoughts developed more fully in the entire section. In vers. 19-23 the Apostle shows *why* this wrath was revealed; in vers. 24-32, *how* it was revealed: but in the latter part he constantly recurs to the previous thought. The former part is a sketch of the downward progress of the heathen world, in its religious life; the latter describes the consequent immorality,

19 who <sup>1</sup>hold down\* the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest

<sup>1</sup> Or, *hold the truth.*

\* For *hold down* read *hinder*.—*Am. Com.*

which is in fact a revelation of God's wrath. (For an analysis of vers. 24-32, see under ver. 24.) The Apostle assumes that religion and morality are inseparably connected; that God punishes impiety by giving up the impious to the wrong practices which are the legitimate fruit of their ungodliness; that truth and right, error and wrong, are vitally connected in human experience.

Ver. 18. **For.** Direct proof of ver. 17; the righteousness from God is revealed by faith, *for* other revelations are of God's wrath. (See note above.)—**The wrath of God.** The article is wanting here, as in vers. 16, 17; but the translation 'a wrath of God' (R. V. marg.), is altogether unnecessary. This phrase is anthropopathic (*i. e.*, borrowed from human feelings); but it expresses a reality, namely, the punitive justice and holiness of God over against sin. Yet, this wrath of God, so frequently spoken of, must not be confounded with its result, the punishment of sin; it is rather 'an affection of the personal God, having a necessary connection with His love. The wrath of God, the reality of which is indisputable as the very presupposition of the work of atonement, is the love of the holy God (who is neither neutral nor one-sided in His affection) for all that is good in its energy as antagonistic to all that is evil' (Meyer).—**Is revealed.** The continuous revelation is indicated. It is not necessary to assume that such a revelation is exclusively supernatural, especially here where historical facts exemplify the *mode* of the revelation. Hence the revelation is an outward one, not that accomplished through the gospel.—**From heaven;** to be joined with 'revealed.' 'Heaven,' as the dwelling-place or throne of God, is designated as the place from which this revelation of wrath proceeds.—**Against all ungodliness and unrighteousness.** God's wrath is against every form of irreligiousness and immorality; the two words distinguishing sin with respect to God and the law of right He has established. 'Ungodliness is more the fountain (but at the same time partially the result) of unrighteousness—which unrighteousness is more the result (but at the same time partially the fountain) of ungodliness' (Alford). Hence the terms are not to be applied respectively to sins against God and against men.—**Of men.** The reference is not now to all men, but to those 'who hinder,' etc. Since the Apostle does not charge the Jews with this in chap. 2, the Gentiles are meant here.—**Hold down** (*hinder*, *Am. Com.*), restrain, or hold back, rather than hold; those who hinder the truth from producing its proper results.—**Unrighteousness** is that wherein they hold the truth back, hindering it thereby.

Ver. 19. **Because.** Here begins the statement *why* God's wrath was revealed, which is also a proof that they hold back the truth in unrighteousness. If they did so out of ignorance, they would be ex-

20 in them ; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, *even* his everlasting power and divi-  
21 nity ; <sup>1</sup> that they may be without excuse : because that, knowing God, they glorified him not as God, neither

<sup>1</sup> Or, *so that they are.*

cusable ; but they do not do so out of ignorance, and *therefore* God's wrath is manifested against them' (Meyer). The Apostle proves first that men had the truth (vers. 19, 20) ; then that they hindered it, and perverted it (vers. 21-23). Afterwards the result is described.—**That which may be known of God.** 'Is known' would be more correct. To explain the phrase as meaning the knowledge of God is ungrammatical, while the rendering 'may be known' (Origen, Beza, Calvin, Weiss, and many others) is illogical in this connection, since it is plainly shown that the heathen did not know all that may be known of God.—**In them** ; not, 'among them,' which would refer to a merely external revelation. The Apostle is speaking of a revelation in the heart and conscience.—**God manifested it.** Through the creation (ver. 20). The tense used points to one act.

Ver. 20. **For the invisible things of him.** Some of His attributes, as explained afterwards.—**Since the creation of the world.** 'From,' while literally correct, may be misunderstood as referring to the means of clearly seeing.—**Being perceived,** etc. The mode of clearly seeing the invisible attributes of God is the perception of them through the visible things which He has made.—**Even his everlasting power and divinity.** The word 'everlasting' here is not the same as that usually rendered 'eternal' ; it belongs to both nouns. 'Eternal and Almighty have always been recognized epithets of the Creator' (Alford). Through the 'power' men recognize the 'divinity,' which here means not the personal Deity, but the sum of the divine attributes. The position Paul takes is opposed to Pantheism—**That they may be without excuse.** The designed result is here set forth ; 'so that' (R. V. marg.) is not literally exact. But man's inexcusableness, not God's sovereignty, is under discussion.

Ver. 21. **Because.** The fact which renders them inexcusable is now stated.—**Knowing God they glorified him not as God.** What worship they rendered was not in accordance with the knowledge they had (ver. 20). 'Glorify' refers to praising God for what He is.—**Neither gave thanks ;** *i. e.* did not praise Him for all His benefits.—**Became vain in their reasonings.** 'Imaginations' (A. V.) is inexact ; the R. V. usually renders the term 'reasonings ;' comp. chap. 2: 15. 'Vanity' is a characteristic term for idol-worship ; Deut. 22: 21 ; 2 Kings 17: 5 ; Jer. 2: 5 ; Acts 14: 15.—

gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings,  
 22 and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing  
 23 themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed  
 the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of  
 an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-  
 footed beasts, and creeping things.

24 Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their  
 hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be

**Senseless**, or, 'without understanding,' as the word is translated in ver. 31.—**Heart**. Here, as so often in the Bible, this refers to the whole inner man.—**Was darkened**. (Comp. Eph. 4: 18.) This is the culmination of the process: not worshipping and thanking God, although they knew Him, they became vain in their reasonings; this made their heart senseless, and thus it was darkened, deprived of the truth which it might have had (formerly had) from the light of nature.

Ver. 22. **Professing themselves to be wise**. While (not, because) they professed themselves to be wise. This has reference, not to heathen philosophers, but to the conceit of wisdom which lay back of heathenism itself.—**They became fools**. 'It is not merely that they expose their real folly, but that folly is itself judicially inflicted by God as a punishment for the first step of declension from Him.' (Sanday.) Their folly was manifested in their idolatry. 'For heathenism is not the primeval religion, from which man might gradually have risen to the knowledge of the true God, but is, on the contrary, the result of a falling away from the known original revelation of the true God in His works.' (Meyer.)

Ver. 23. **And changed**. Comp. the strikingly similar passage, Ps. 106: 20. 'Exchanged' is the meaning, as in ver. 25, where, however, a stronger word is used.—**The glory**, etc. God's majesty, perfection, etc., made known as stated in vers. 19-21.—**Incorruptible**; introduced to mark the folly of the exchange.—**For the** (lit., 'a') **likeness of an image**. This expression refers both to the grosser and the more refined form of idolatry; common people saw in the idols the gods themselves; the cultivated heathen regarded them as symbolical representations, etc.—**Of corruptible man**; so the Greeks universally.—**Of birds**, etc. The Egyptians worshipped idols of varied bestial forms, and in Rome this worship prevailed extensively. The order marks a descent to the lowest kind of idolatrous representation; even the images of **creeping things** were worshipped.

Ver. 24. **Wherefore**. Having shown that the heathen had the truth and held it back in unrighteousness, the Apostle now shows *how* God's wrath was displayed: generally in giving them up to uncleanness (vers. 24, 25), and specially to unnatural sensuality (vers.

25 dishonoured among themselves: for that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed <sup>1</sup>for ever. Amen.

26 For this cause God gave them up unto <sup>2</sup>vile pas-

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *unto the ages.*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *passions of dishonour.*

26, 27), as well as to other vices which are named (vers. 28-32).—**Gave them up.** This is more than ‘permitted.’ ‘The deep shame of the heathen is a divinely ordained result of their idolatry’ (Beet). That sin is punished by sin, we are taught by the Bible and by daily experience. God abandons man to the consequence of his own doings, and thus punishes him. This divinely instituted law is in perfect harmony with our personal freedom and moral accountability.—**In the lusts of their hearts.** Not ‘through,’ but ‘in,’ signifying the moral sphere in which they were, when the judicial abandonment by God delivered them over to a still worse condition.—**Unto uncleanness;** either impurity in general (Weiss), or unchastity in particular (Meyer). The heathen scarcely recognized lewdness as sinful.—**That their bodies should be dishonoured.** This may mean either the purpose or wherein the uncleanness consisted. Meyer prefers the latter.—**Among themselves.** The better supported reading is ‘them;’ which, however, implies the sense, ‘themselves.’

Ver. 25. **For that,** or, more fully expressed, ‘since they were such as.’ Here the Apostle reverts to the reason for the punishment.—**Exchanged.** A stronger phrase than that in ver. 23.—**The truth of God.** The truth or reality of God, the true Divine essence, practically the same as ‘the true God.’ The latter phrase would perhaps seem irreverent. Other views, the true knowledge of God, the true notion of God, etc., are less in keeping with the figure of exchanging.—**For a lie;** comp. Jer. 13: 25, and similar passages, where idols are called a ‘lie.’ The term is apt. because the heathen gods have no existence.—**Worshipped and served.** The former means religious reverence of every kind; the latter, formal worship, with sacrifice, and other acts and rites.—**Rather than the Creator.** The nature of the case leads us to prefer ‘rather than’ to ‘more than;’ for idolatry is incompatible with the worship of the true God, who shares His honor with none of His creatures.—**Who is blessed,** etc. The doxology is the natural outburst of piety aroused into holy indignation at the sin of idolatry, which is by the contrast portrayed in its darkest colors. The word rendered ‘blessed’ is applied, in the Bible, only to God; a different one is used of man, in the Psalms, Sermon on the Mount, etc.—**Amen.** Comp. chaps. 9: 5; 11: 33, for this solemn, liturgical close of a doxology.

Ver. 26. **For this cause;** namely, because of the apostasy described in ver. 25. But as that repeats in another form the thought of ver. 23, so this verse takes up anew the thought of ver. 24. **The unclean-**

sions: for their women changed the natural use into  
 27 that which is against nature: and likewise also the  
 men, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in  
 their lust one toward another, men with men working  
 unseemliness, and receiving in themselves that recompense  
 of their error which was due.

28 And even as they <sup>1</sup>refused to have God in *their*  
 knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind,  
 29 to do those things which are not fitting; being filled  
 with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness,

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *did not approve.*

ness to which the heathen were given up took a special and aggravated form; as **vile passions**, lit., 'passions of dishonor.' These are truthfully described, and yet with modest reticence.—**Women**; lit., 'females.' Abundant evidence of such unnatural crime is found in heathen writers.

Ver. 27. **The men**; lit., 'males.' The vice of sodomy was very prevalent in the ancient world. The description here is more intense, corresponding with the prevalence and intensity of the immorality.—**Unseemliness**, lit., 'the unseemliness,' already hinted in the first half of the verse (Weiss).—**Receiving in themselves**; in their own persons.—**That recompense of their error**. The unnatural lusts and vices were the recompense, the due punishment, of their 'error,' namely, their departure from God into idolatry.

Ver. 28. **And even as**. This is not equivalent to 'because,' but marks the correspondence between the sin and its punishment.—Having chosen out the most glaring form of vice, the Apostle enumerates others which formed part of the punishment. Here, as throughout, he reverts to the reason they were given over, thus emphasizing anew the connection between religion and morality.—**They refused**, etc., did not deem it worth while; the original makes 'God' the object; did not deem God worthy to have in knowledge.—**Unto a reprobate mind**. 'Refused' and 'reprobate' represent words that sound alike; but the play on the words cannot be readily reproduced. 'Reprobate' means rejected of God as unworthy. The heathen were not deprived of the faculty of distinguishing between right and wrong; but they practiced evil, and encouraged it in others (ver. 32). Because 'they knew the better and approved,' their guilt was the greater when they 'yet the worse pursued.'—**Which are not fitting**, *i. e.*, indecent, immoral; what these things were is detailed in vers. 29-31. The Greek negative suggests that these things were regarded as immoral by the heathen themselves.

Ver. 29. **Being filled with all unrighteousness**. This is a general statement, the specifications follow. Similar catalogues of

maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit,  
 30 malignity: whisperers, backbiters, <sup>1</sup>hateful to God,  
 insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things,  
 31 disobedient to parents, without understanding, cove-  
 nant-breakers, without natural affection, unmerciful:

<sup>1</sup> Or, *haters of God.*

sins occur several times in the New Testament. Various ingenious attempts have been made at classifying this list; but the Apostle seems to have had in mind rhetorical effect, rather than systematic order, the design being to bring out more strikingly the absolute need of redemption. (The word 'fornication' is omitted by the best authorities; and after vers. 26, 27, the naming of this vice seems inappropriate.)—**Wickedness**; disposition to accomplish evil; the adjective is applied to Satan.—**Covetousness**; this sin is emphasized in the New Testament (see especially Eph. 5: 3, 5; Col. 3: 5), and was widespread, at that time, in the Roman world.—**Maliciousness** in the classical sense is vileness as opposed to virtue.—**Envy**. Conceived here as the *thought* which has filled the man.—**Murder**. The similarity in sound of the original words may have led to the mention of this sin first here; but 'envy' and 'murder' are related.—**Strife**. The word is that applied to the goddess of Discord.—**Whisperers**; secret slanderers, tale-bearers. (This word ought to be placed in the next verse.)

Ver. 30. **Backbiters**; open slanderers, or calumniators.—**Hateful to God**; or (so A. V.), 'haters of God.' The former sense is the classical one; the latter is supposed to be more in accordance with the Biblical view of God, but is rejected by most recent commentators. 'Leaving the word in its strict significance *hatred of God*, we recognize in it a *summary judgment of moral indignation respecting all the preceding particulars*; so that, looking back on these, it forms a resting-point in the disgraceful catalogue' (Meyer). Alford remarks: 'If any crime was known more than another, as "hatred by the gods," it was that of *informers*, abandoned persons who circumvented and ruined others by a system of malignant espionage and false information.'—**Insolent, haughty, boastful**; three terms applying to self-exaltation, the last the least offensive.—**Disobedient to parents**. 'Apostasy from the piety and affection due to parents is a foundation of corruption. See Mal. 4: 6; Luke 1: 17' (Lange).

Ver. 31. In this verse adjectives take the place of the substantives previously used. The long catalogue is thus varied—**Without understanding**; the same word as 'senseless' (A. V. 'foolish'), ver. 21.—**Covenant-breakers**. In the original there is another play upon the sound of the words. (The best authorities omit 'implacable.')

—**Unmerciful**. This concludes the list, marking in the absence of the least principle of moral action.



32 who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they which practise such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practise them.

## CHAPTER 2: 1-16.

### *The Ground on which the Jews also are Condemned.*

1 Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest

Ver. 32. **Who**; or, as in ver. 25, 'being such as.' This verse adds to the description of vices a deeper degree of immorality; showing how entirely the heathen are 'without excuse' (ver. 20; chap. 2: 1).—**Knowing**. A stronger word than in ver. 21. Their conscience gave such knowledge.—**Ordinance of God**. The word 'ordinance' is derived from the verb meaning to justify, and means a justifying verdict or decree; here it is the sentence or decree of God as Righteous Lawgiver and Judge, connecting death with sin, and life with righteousness, as recognized in the conscience.—**Practise**. This word suggests a repetition and continuance of the actions—**Worthy of death**. The heathen recognized that sin must be punished, and Paul indicates that the punishment is 'death,' by which he usually meant (whatever the heathen understood) eternal death. There is, however, no objection to understanding it more generally.—**Consent with them that practise them**. This is the sign of completed moral abandonment; they fail even to condemn it in others. It is almost equivalent to saying, 'evil, be thou my good.' The climax of the punishment of sin by sin suggests one feature of the eternal death threatened in the Bible. This dark picture of heathen corruption is not overdrawn, though honorable exceptions existed. Not all heathen had these vices, but as a whole the description is correct. It can be verified by testimony from the classical writers, especially from Seneca and Tacitus. The Apostle 'was writing at this moment from Corinth, a city notorious for the licentiousness of its idol worship, and we cannot wonder that he should see in the abominations by which he was surrounded the worst, and latest development of evil' (Sanday). Deep moral corruption has, it is true, pervaded Christendom. But there remains this radical difference: heathen religion produced and sanctioned heathen corruptions; Christendom is corrupt in spite of Christianity.

## CHAPTERS 2-3: 20.

### *2. The Sinfulness of the Jews, as a proof of their Need of the Gospel.*

This passage contains the second part of the proof of the universality of sin, and hence the universal need of the gospel, wherein is revealed a righteousness from

<sup>1</sup>another, thou condemnest thyself: for thou that

<sup>1</sup>Gr. *the other.*

God appropriated by faith. It begins with a direct address to one who is not named, but characterized as a Jew, and passes to a direct proof of the guilt of the Jews, not only in spite of, but also in consequence of, their greater privilege, concluding with the formal declaration that no one can be justified by the works of the law (chap. 3: 20). The general proof of the sinfulness of the Jews is found in chap. 2, while 3: 1-20 presents a confirmation from the Scriptures, which it is the privilege of the Jew to possess. For convenience, we divide chap. 2 into two sections: the first (1) setting forth the grounds of God's judgment of all men (vers. 1-16); the second (2) applying this principle to the case of the Jews (vers. 17-29), while (3) the Scriptural proof of their guilt is presented in chap. 3: 1-20.

(1) *The ground on which the Jews also are condemned*, vers. 1-16.

The Jews would at once assent to the truthfulness of the previous description; but while condemning the Gentiles, they would mentally excuse themselves. To this natural yet improper state of mind, the Apostle replies. He shows great rhetorical skill, both in the use of direct address, and in not at once naming the Jews. The truth he states, and which he uses to convict the Jews, is of universal validity. The rhetorical form only enhances the logical force of the argument. This section is, in fact, the major proposition of a syllogism: All who judge others for sins they themselves commit, are under God's condemnation (vers. 1-5); for God's judgment is on moral (not national or ceremonial) grounds (vers. 6-11); and, moreover, He judges men according to the light they have (vers. 12-16). There is, throughout, a movement of thought towards the application to the Jew, which is expressed in vehement form in the next section; the minor proposition being found in vers. 17-20: the Jew, having more light, condemns others for sins he himself commits. The second paragraph of this section, which asserts the universal principle of God's judgment, contains a series of antithetic parallelisms (see notes).

Ver. 1. **Wherefore.** This refers to the preceding section (vers. 18-32), especially to the inexcusableness of the heathen, the culminating proof of which is found in ver. 32.—**Without excuse**; as in chap. 1: 20.—**O man, whosoever thou art**, etc. The application to the Jews (ver. 17, etc.) shows that they are in the Apostle's mind; moreover this judgment of others was characteristic of the Jews. But what he says is true of every one 'whosoever' he is (see above).—**Wherein.** 'In the matter in which.'—**Another**, lit., 'the other'; as it is rendered in 1 Cor 10: 29. We would use 'thy neighbor' to express the thought, but the Jew would not call a Gentile 'neighbor.'—**Condemnest.** There is a verbal correspondence in the original between 'judgest' and 'condemnest.'—**For thou that judgest**, etc. This is the proof of the self-condemnation: for the judgment pronounced upon others applies to the man's own conduct. There is a 'reproachful emphasis' upon thou that judgest.—**Dost practise.** The verb is the same as in chap. 1: 32, and in ver. 27; both it and the corresponding noun have *usually* a bad sense.—**The same things.**

2 judgest doth practise the same things. <sup>1</sup> And we know that the judgement of God is according to truth  
3 against them that practise such things. And reckonest thou this, O man, who judgest them that practise such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape  
4 the judgement of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *For*.

Not the same deeds, but of the same moral quality. The censorious spirit is of the same sinful character as vice; the most moral men have sinful natures, and are kept from open transgression only by the grace of God, or by a pride which is no less sinful than vice.

Ver. 2. **And we know.** Two very ancient manuscripts read 'for'; but this was likely to have been an alteration. Paul thus introduces what he regards and what his readers regard as an undoubted truth. It is not necessary to suppose that he means 'we Jews.'—**According to truth.** This belongs to the verb 'is'; the judgment of God is according to truth, and hence it is **against them that practise such things.**

Ver. 3. **And reckonest thou,** etc. There is a slight antithesis here: 'and' (although this is the case that God's judgment is against, etc.) dost thou reckon, etc., have this opinion or fancy.—**This,** namely, what follows the description of the man addressed: **that thou shalt escape the judgement of God?** This seems to have been the Jewish error; according to ver. 2 such escape was impossible. But it is an error not confined to the Jews. 'The sinner can persuade himself, and by many kinds of misconception stupefy himself, so as to believe that his sins will go unpunished. (Tübingen Bible.) Ah, how common is this deception!

Ver. 4. **Or despisest thou,** etc. A new error. 'The fallacy against which the Apostle is protesting in these verses is not yet extinct. The goodness of God. *i. e.*, His disposition to promote the happiness of His creatures, is insisted upon as if it were unconditional, as if it were a disposition to promote their happiness simply and without any reference to what they were in themselves' (Sanday).—**Riches;** referring to abundance or magnitude; a favorite expression with the Apostle, especially in the Epistle to the Ephesians.—**Goodness:** the general and positive term (taken up again), which is further explained by **forbearance and long-suffering;** the negative terms referring to God's tolerating sin and withholding punishment.—**Not knowing.** 'Inasmuch as you do not know.' Not the same word as ver. 2. Culpable ignorance; ignoring the fact that might be known, is perhaps implied.—**Leadeth** (or, 'is leading') **thee to repentance.** This is its purpose and its tendency; but it is thwarted

5 repentance? but after thy hardness and impenitent  
heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of  
wrath and revelation of the righteous judgement of  
6 God; who will render to every man according to his  
7 works: to them that by patience in well-doing seek  
for glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life;

by man's wilful ignorance. This verse is a question; but in the next verse, which is so closely joined with it, this interrogative form is gradually lost.

Ver. 5. **But.** With this tendency of the goodness of God is contrasted the conduct of man. Instead of being thereby led to repentance, men allow themselves to fancy that God's goodness is a proof that He will not punish sin.—**After thy hardness and impenitent heart.** As might be expected from, in accordance with and occasioned by, thy hardness, etc.—**Treasurest up for thyself;** thou for thyself, not God for thee. 'The despising of the riches of God's goodness in forbearance and long-suffering is the heaping up of a treasure of wrath' (Lange).—**In the day of wrath;** wrath which will be revealed in the day of wrath; 'against' is quite incorrect.—**And revelation,** etc. This qualifies 'day.' God's 'righteous judgment' (one word in Greek) will not be fully revealed until the great day of final judgment.

Ver. 6. **Who will render,** etc. This is the universal principle of God's judgment, and it is set forth in detail in vers. 7-10, which form a parallelism. In fact, vers. 6 and 11 are parallel; vers. 7-10 being an amplification of the contrast implied in both of these verses.—**Works.** This is the word so frequently used by Paul in this Epistle and in Galatians. Unfortunately the A. V. sometimes (as here) translates it 'deeds.' Some difficulty has been raised as to the agreement of this principle with the doctrine of justification by faith, to which such emphasis is afterwards given. But (1) the Apostle is expounding the law, or the revelation of wrath (chap. 1: 18), not the gospel. (2) Good works are the fruit and evidence of faith. 'The wicked will be punished on account of their works, and according to their works; the righteous will be rewarded, not on account of, but according to their works. Good works are to them the evidence of their belonging to that class to whom, for Christ's sake, eternal life is graciously awarded; and they are in some sense, and to some extent, the measure of that reward' (Hodge). The fact that the Apostle, in this connection, speaks of the judgment as 'according to my gospel, through Jesus Christ,' shows that he was not aware of any inconsistency between the two principles.

Vers. 7-10. The parallelism will appear from the following arrangement:—

A { To them that by patience in well-doing  
Seek for glory and honor and incorruption,  
Eternal life:

8 but unto them that are factious, and obey not the  
9 truth, but obey unrighteousness, *shall be* wrath and  
indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul

- B { But unto them that are factious,  
And obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness,  
Shall be wrath and indignation.
- B { Tribulation and anguish,  
Upon every soul of man that worketh evil,  
Of the Jew first, and also of the Greek;
- A { But glory and honor and peace,  
To every man that worketh good,  
To the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

The first and fourth, second and third stanzas are respectively parallel; but the lines in the first and second give (1) the *character*, (2) the *pursuits*, and (3) the *reward* of the opposite classes. The third and fourth stanzas reverse this order.

Ver. 7. **By patience**, or, better, perseverance, steadfastness. The preposition in the original points to the standard according to which the action is performed.—**In well-doing**, or, 'good work.' The substantive is the same as in ver. 6; here to express the character as a unit. The whole phrase qualifies the verb.—**Seek for glory and honour and incorruption**. Future salvation is thus described as the object of pursuit: it is 'glory,' because of its splendid manifestation; 'honor,' because it is a reward; 'incorruption,' because it is eternal. Whether any who are not Christians have thus sought, is not declared by the Apostle; comp. ver. 14.—**Eternal life**. This is what God will render to the class just spoken of. The phrase is distinctively Christian.

Ver. 8. **Unto them that are factious**; lit., 'of faction.' The word is derived from one meaning to work for hire, and in the New Testament always means factiousness, venal partisanship; here it refers to those who are intriguing, selfishly serving a party, and not the truth.—**Obey not the truth**. 'The truth' and 'unrighteousness' are directly opposed to each other by the Apostle.—**Wrath and indignation**. This is the better supported order. 'Wrath' points to the permanent attitude of a holy God toward sin; 'indignation,' to its particular manifestation, at the judgment. 'Shall be,' is supplied to reproduce the change of construction in the original; a delicate adjustment to indicate that, while God is directly the giver of eternal life, the punishment of sin is the necessary result of the sinner's own conduct, even though God punishes. Comp. a similar change in chap. 9: 22, 23.

Ver. 9. **Tribulation and anguish**. The parallelism is continued in reverse order. 'Tribulation' refers to the external weight of affliction; 'anguish' to the internal sense of its weight, or to the impossibility of escaping from it. Beet renders the latter word

of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also  
 10 of the Greek ; but glory and honour and peace to  
 every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and  
 11 also to the Greek ; for there is no respect of persons  
 12 with God. For as many as have sinned \* without law

\* Gr. *sinned*.—*Am. Com.*

'helplessness.' In any case it forms the climax.—**Every soul of man.** An emphatic and solemn way of saying 'every man' (comp. chap. 13: 1), but possibly implying that it is the 'soul' which feels the pain. That the body may not share in the punishment is not stated, here or elsewhere.—**Worketh evil**, or, 'is working out.' The article is found in the original ('the evil,' 'the good'). The verb, which means to work out, to accomplish, is stronger than the simple verb which occurs in ver. 10; but in both cases habitual action is indicated.—**Of the Jew first.** First in privilege, the Jew becomes first in responsibility; comp. chap. 1: 16. It now becomes evident that this chapter refers especially to the Jews.—**Of the Greek;** comp. chap. 1: 16; where the term, as here, is equivalent to 'Gentile' (so incorrectly rendered in A. V.).

Ver. 10. **Glory and honour and peace.** (Comp. ver. 7.) 'Peace' is here used in its fullest sense; in the Old Testament it includes 'peace, plenty, and prosperity,' but with more of a temporal reference than its New Testament use. Comp. chap. 8: 6, and similar passages

Ver 11. **For there is no respect,** etc. This is not a mere repetition of ver. 6; but gives the reason God must judge the Jew *first*. The verse, therefore, constitutes a proper transition to the next paragraph (vers. 12-16), which sets forth that God's judgment is according to light. The phrase 'respect of persons' is represented in the original by one word. The conception is from the Hebrew (to lift up, or accept, the face), and in the New Testament is always used in a bad sense of unjust partiality. In the Old Testament it sometimes has a good sense.

Ver. 12. **For.** This introduces an explanation, namely, since God is no respecter of persons, it follows that He will judge according to light.—**As many as have sinned without law.** The marginal note of the Am. Revisers shows that 'have sinned' is not a literal rendering. 'Without law' is a single adverb in the original, and refers to the absence of the *Mosaic law* as a standard of morals, since the Gentiles were not absolutely without law (comp. vers. 14, 15). The next clause also refers to the Mosaic law, although both here and in ver. 13 the article is wanting in the original. The word 'law' in this definite sense was so common among the Greek-speaking Jews that they treated it as a proper name, and frequently omitted the article. Many recent English Commentators claim that 'law' without the article means abstract law, and 'the law' the Mosaic law, or that

shall also perish without law; and as many as have 13 sinned \* under law shall be judged by law; for not

\* Gr. *sime l.*—*Am. Com.*

the word 'law' refers to the general principle 'do this and live;' the words 'the law' to 'the historical and literary form in which this principle took shape in the ears and eyes and thoughts of the Jews' (Beet). Yet the presence or absence of the article does not in Paul's usage necessarily indicate even this distinction.—**Also perish.** 'Also' points to the correspondence between sinning and perishing; the latter is the opposite of salvation, and does not mean annihilation.—**Under law**: lit., 'in law,' in that condition, not simply in possession of it.—**Shall be judged by law.** The Jews 'are to be judged by *means of the law*, so that sentence shall be passed upon them in virtue of it. See Deut. 27: 26; comp. John 5: 45' (Meyer). It is evident that any other reference than to the Mosaic law makes the passage very flat. The verse teaches that the immoral heathen will not be punished, however, with the rigor of the written law, as in the case of disobedient Jews and unfaithful Christians, but according to their light. The unfaithful Christians will be judged more severely than the disobedient Jews, and the disobedient Jews than the immoral Gentiles. The last, however, will not go unpunished, since they are without excuse (chap. 1: 20; vers. 14-15).

Ver. 13. **For.** This introduces the proof of the latter part of ver. 12. The parenthesis of the A. V. is not only unnecessary, but misleading; for it improperly connects ver. 16 with ver. 12, and places the important proof of this verse in a subordinate position (see under vers. 14, 16). The Jewish mistake was that the *possession* of the law of itself gave them an advantage in the judgment. They practically denied that those who sinned under the law would be judged by the law. Now the Apostle's object is to prove the Jews guilty before God and in need of righteousness by faith; this verse, therefore, is an important link in the chain of his reasoning, and not a parenthetical statement.—**The hearers of a (the, Am. Com.) law.** The best authorities omit the article before 'law' in both clauses; but the phrases are equivalent to 'law-hearers' and 'law-doers,' evidently referring here to the Mosaic law, however correct the more general application may be. Compare the rendering of the American Company.—**Are just before God.** That God's verdict is meant, so that 'the righteous before God' are those who are 'justified,' is perfectly clear from the whole sweep of the argument.—**But the doers, etc.** This form of the general principle of ver. 6 opposes the Jewish error, and it is not at all in opposition to the principle of justification by faith (see in ver. 6). 'How in the event of its being impossible for a man to be a true "doer of the law" (3: 9 ff.) faith comes in and furnishes a "righteousness by faith," and then how man, by means of the "newness of life" (6: 4) attained through faith, must and can fulfil

the hearers of a law\* are <sup>1</sup>just before God, but  
 14 the doers of a law shall be <sup>2</sup>justified: for † when  
 Gentiles which have no ‡ law do by nature the things  
 of the law, these, having no § law, are a law unto  
 15 themselves; in that they shew the work of the law

\* For a law read the law.—*Am. Com.*

† Enclose vers. 14, 15 in a parenthesis.—*Am. Com.*

‡ For which have no read that have not the.—*Am. Com.*

§ For having no read not having the.—*Am. Com.*

<sup>1</sup> Or, righteous.

<sup>2</sup> Or, accounted righteous.

(8: 4) the law fulfilled by Christ ("the law of the Spirit of life," 8: 2), were topics not belonging to the present discussion' (Meyer).—**Shall be justified.** Hence this phrase means, 'shall be accounted righteous.' (See *Excursus* before chap. 3: 21.) It is especially unfortunate here, where the adjective 'righteous' occurs, that we have no corresponding verb of the same derivation, to express the sense of 'justify.' This is the theoretical effect of law, and is the practical effect when by faith one is made, as the result of justification, a doer of the law. (Comp. note on ver. 6.)

Ver. 14. **For.** The principle of ver. 13 is now applied, so far as it can be, to the Gentiles, and this thought is parenthetical (vers. 14, 15); ver. 16 being connected with the close of ver. 13. The American Company prefer to insert marks of parenthesis in the text. Here, as in the previous discussion, the theoretical effect of law is set forth. The Gentiles have a law within themselves, which is, so to speak, a substitute for the Mosaic law, and by this law they are judged, by the doing of it, not by the hearing of it. It is not asserted that any do thus attain to justification; the word **when** having a conditional force.—

**Gentiles.** The article is wanting; the expression refers to those Gentiles among whom the supposed case occurs.—**Which have no law.** The rendering of the *Am. Com.* is more exact. The state of the Gentiles as a whole is, however, described; they have not a revealed law.—**Do by nature**, independently of express enactment: on this the emphasis rests.—**The things of the law.** This points to individual requirements, rather than to the keeping of the whole law. The explanation: 'do what the law does,' command, convince, condemn, etc., is opposed by the phrase 'doers of the law' (ver. 13).—**Having no law**, etc. More exactly: **Not having the law** (*Am. Com.*), *i. e.*, since they do not have, or, though they do not have. The former is preferable, in view of the connection of thought. Their moral nature supplies for them the place of the revealed law, in the case supposed. It is not implied that the place of the Mosaic law is thus fully supplied.

Ver. 15. **In that**, or, 'being such as.' This is virtually the proof that they are a law unto themselves.—**Shew the work of the law.** By their doing of it show what is the work of the law—the sum of



written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their <sup>1</sup>thoughts one with another  
16 accusing or else excusing *them*;\* in the day when

<sup>1</sup> Or, *reasonings*.

\* Add marg. Or, *their thoughts accusing or else excusing them one with another.*—*Am. Com.*

‘the things of the law’ (ver. 14).—**Written in their hearts.** They show that this work of the law is written in their hearts. That is, the Gentiles, in the case assumed, are a law unto themselves, as is evident from their showing by their acts that what the law enjoins is written in their hearts.—**Their conscience bearing witness therewith.** Their conscience adds its testimony to that of their act; ‘witnesses together with.’ The practical proof (‘show,’ etc.) is confirmed by this internal use.—**Their thoughts one with another.** ‘Meanwhile’ (A. V.) is incorrect. The question arises, whether ‘one with another’ refers to ‘thoughts’ or to the persons spoken of. The latter view (expressed in the marginal rendering added by the Am. Com.) indicates that their moral judgments upon one another also attest that the law is written in their hearts. The former view, which is preferable, makes the whole of the latter part of the verse refer to the moral process which takes place in the heart of man after a good or bad act: the conscience sits in judgment, rendering sentence in God’s name according to the law; the ‘thoughts’ are the several moral reflections which appear as witnesses in this court of conscience.—**Accusing or else excusing them.** ‘Even’ is preferable to ‘else,’ since it suggests that the conscience finds more accusing than excusing thoughts. It is also true, that adverse judgments of other persons are more common; but the judgment spoken of is, more probably, that of a man upon his own acts and feelings. ‘This judicial process, which takes place here in every man’s heart, is a forerunner of the great judgment at the end of the world’ (Schaff). ‘How can we fail to admire here both that fine analysis with which the Apostle reveals in the heart of the Gentiles a true hall of judgment, where are heard the witnesses against and for the accused, then the sentence of the judge—and that largeness of heart with which, after having traced so repulsive a picture of the moral deformities of Gentile life (chap. 1), he brings out here in a manner not less striking the indestructible moral elements of which that life, although so profoundly debased, offers now and then the unexceptionable signs’ (Godet).

Ver. 16. **In the day.** The question of connection is the important one. Some join directly with ver. 15, referring the ‘day’ to the day when the gospel is preached to the Gentiles, and the demonstration of vers. 14, 15, is made. But this verse seems to point to the future judgment. Most commentators, therefore, look for the connection in some more appropriate part of the preceding context. The A. V. joins with ver. 12; but ver. 13 is not parenthetical (see ver. 13). Vers. 14, 15,

God <sup>1</sup>shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 2: 17-29.

*The Jew is Condemned; His External Circumcision does not Avail.*

17 But if thou bearest the name of a Jew, and retest

<sup>1</sup> Or, judgeth.

are, however, and the connection with ver. 13 ('the doers of the law shall be justified') is even more appropriate, since it brings the discussion closer to the main thought, namely, the conviction of the Jews. (Vers. 5 and 10, which have been suggested, are too remote.) 'The attempt to preserve the close connection with ver. 15, by rendering 'unto the day,' is grammatically objectionable.—**Shall judge.** A change of accent permits the translation, 'judgeth;' but even the present tense might point to the great day of judgment.—**The secrets of men.** In order to justify the doers of the law (ver. 13), the moral quality of their actions must be determined; this is not known to men, it belongs to the secret things.—**According to my gospel.** This cannot refer to a writing called Paul's Gospel. It was the gospel he preached, 'my' pointing either to the fact that he preached it, or to his special message to the Gentiles. The gospel of the free grace of God in Christ for the salvation of all that believe, revealed to him directly by Christ at his conversion and call to the Apostleship; comp. Gal. 1: 7-9, 11, 16. 'According to' may refer only to the fact or judgment, which his gospel declares; but this seems a weak thought in this connection. Paul was so assured of the truth of the gospel he preached that he conceives of it as presenting the standard of judgment in the great day. Nor is this an inappropriate thought. The principle of ver. 13, it is thus indicated, accords with the gospel; furthermore, the gospel is about Jesus Christ (chap. 1: 3, 4), and the judgment is **by** (lit., 'through') **Jesus Christ**, who is not only Mediator in the gospel, but Judge in the great 'day' (comp. Acts 17: 30, 31); and many similar passages. The Saviour is Judge; good news for those who accept Him, but a warning to those who refuse Him. Since He is the Judge, and God renders 'to every man according to his works' (ver. 6), our good works also are through Jesus Christ, and His salvation must result in such works.

(2) *The Jew is Condemned; His External Circumcision does not Avail,*  
vers. 17-29.

This section contains the direct application to the case of the Jew, in the form of an indignant outburst (vers. 17-24), much of the vehemence of which has been lost through the incorrect reading followed in the A. V.; the general principle is then ap-

18 upon <sup>1</sup> the law, and gloriest in God, and knowest <sup>2</sup> his will, and <sup>3</sup> approvest the things that are excellent, 19 being instructed out of the law, and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them

<sup>1</sup> Or, a law.<sup>2</sup> Or, the Will.<sup>3</sup> Or, *provest* (doth distinguish.—Am. Com.) the things that differ.

plied to circumcision (vers. 25-29); preparing the way for the thought of chap. 3. The stronghold of Jewish pride was the sign of circumcision, and a reference to it could not well be omitted in this rebuke to Jewish pride. Vers. 17-24 virtually resume the thought of vers. 1-3, but this thought had been enforced in the intervening verses, so that there is no abrupt change of subject. (Vers. 17-20 form the minor proposition; vers. 21-24 the conclusion of the syllogism introduced by the last section.) No man must condemn another, for the judgment is on moral grounds and according to light; (vers. 1-16); the Jew condemns others, proud of his religious privileges (vers. 17-20); which but makes his immorality the more inexcusable (vers. 21-24), and there is no escape through circumcision, since true circumcision is of the heart (vers. 25-29).

Ver. 17. **But if.** The addition of a single letter in the Græek gives this sense, which is without doubt the correct one. The construction is modified by the change; vers. 17-20 form the conditional part of the sentence, and vers. 21-24 the conclusion in the form of successive questions (but see on ver. 23). 'If' is, of course, rhetorical; there could be no doubt as to the position and feelings of the Jew.—**Thou.** Emphatic, as the original indicates.—**Bearest the name of.** 'Art called,' is incorrect, 'art named' is not so exact as the full paraphrase we give.—**A Jew.** The name of *Judah* had a religious sense, and the title of 'Jew' was regarded as highly honorable. The title of 'Christian' may also become a mere title.—**Restest upon the law.** The article is omitted, but the Mosaic law is, of course, meant.—**Gloriest in God.** The verb may be rendered 'boast' or 'glory.' The former word suggests a false glorying, arising from bigotry and conceit, and this is the sense here; but 'glory' preserves the correspondence with the passage where the word retains its good sense.

Ver. 18. **And knowest his will;** lit., 'the Will,' evidently God's will, as revealed in the law.—**Approvest the things that are excellent;** or, 'dost distinguish the things that differ.' Both translations are verbally exact, the latter being more in accordance with usage. But it gives so tame a sense here, in this glowing rebuke, that the other is to be preferred. 'Provest' (Eng. Com. marg.) is inexact.—**Being instructed,** etc. This was the means by which the will of God was known, and the excellent things approved. There is reference to the public reading and exposition of the law in the synagogue.

Ver. 19. **And art confident.** Vers. 19, 20 set forth the attitude of the Jew toward the Gentile, not only regarding himself as su-

20 that are in darkness, <sup>1</sup> a corrector of the foolish, a  
 teacher of babes, having in the law the form of know-  
 21 ledge and of the truth; thou therefore that teachest  
 another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest  
 22 a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that

<sup>1</sup> Or, *an instructor.*

perior, but *condescending* to make proselytes. This attitude grew out of the facts indicated in ver. 18, as is suggested by the connective used in the Greek.—**That thou thyself art**, etc. These proud designations were not uncommon among the Jews, who deemed the Gentiles 'blind' and 'in darkness.' In proselyting they presented themselves as 'guides' and 'lights.' The history in the Acts shows how they held themselves toward the Gentiles.

Ver. 20. **A corrector of the foolish.** 'Instructor' (marg.) is too weak; 'corrector' is possibly too strong. 'Trainer' is the exact sense.—**A teacher of babes.** These figurative expressions correctly represent the proud attitude of the Jews as religious instructors.—**Having in the law.** The change of order gives clearness. This clause gives, in effect, the reason of the Jewish attitude just described. (The article is here used with 'law,' because the whole law as a book is spoken of).—**The form of knowledge and of the truth.** Not the 'mere form' (as in 2 Tim. 3: 5), but the 'very form,' the exact model, pattern, representative. Religious knowledge and truth had found their embodiment and expression in the law. Paul honored the law (chap. 3: 21, 31, etc.), and would not speak of it as a mere appearance. Further, the severe rebuke of the following verses implies actual, not seeming, religious privilege. Because the Jew had such privileges, his sin was all the greater: to belong to the true church, to hold the true doctrine, to be able to expound it to others should make us better men; but when these things are joined with unholiness, they but add to our condemnation. At the close of the verse a semicolon has been properly substituted for the period of the A. V.

Ver. 21. **Thou therefore.** 'Therefore' sums up what has been previously said. 'Being such an one, to thee, I say,' etc. The question implies surprise at such a state of things, and rebukes it.—**Teachest thou not thyself?** This is the general accusation, that the conduct of the Jew did not agree with his knowledge and assumed position, set forth in vers. 17-20. The specifications follow, with a summing up of the result in ver. 23.—**Dost thou steal?** In this charge there is probably a reference 'to the passionate and treacherous method of transacting business adopted by the Jews; Jas. 4: 13.' (Lange.)

Ver. 22. **Commit adultery.** The loose practices in regard to divorce (Matt. 19: 8-9) amounted to this sin, and the Talmud charges adultery upon some of the most celebrated Rabbins.—**Abhorrest**

sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou  
 commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou  
 23 <sup>1</sup>rob temples? \* thou who gloriest in <sup>2</sup>the law, through  
 thy transgression of the law dishonourest thou God?  
 24 for the name of God is blasphemed among the Gen-

<sup>1</sup> Or commit sacrilege.<sup>2</sup> Or a law.

\* Omit the marg.—Am. Com.

**idols.** The noun corresponding to the verb here used is 'abomination' (Matt. 24; 15, etc.), a term applied to idols.—**Dost thou rob temples**; or, as in the A. V., 'commit sacrilege?' The passage has occasioned much discussion. 'Commit sacrilege' seems to stand in no necessary connection with abhorring idols, whereas the robbing of heathen temples, thus making personal gain of the 'abominations,' would be a grievous sin. The objection that the Jews, not regarding the idol temples as sacred, would not deem it a special sin to rob them, does not seem valid, nor can the crime be deemed so singular that it would not be mentioned here. In Deut. 7: 25 the destruction of graven images is commanded, but the robbery of the gold and silver on them is strictly forbidden; the words used in the prohibition in the LXX. being similar to 'abhor' here. Various less literal interpretations have been suggested: Embezzlement of their own temple taxes, etc.; avarice, even robbing God by seeking salvation by works (Luther). The sense we advocate implies that the Jew by making gain of heathen idol worship becomes an idolator. There is then a climax, theft, adultery, idolatry,—three sins so often associated in the Scriptures and in practice.

Ver. 23. **Thou who gloriest in.** Comp. ver. 17.—**Through this** (lit. 'the') **transgression of the law, dishonourest thou God?** or, 'thou dishonorest God.' This points to the infraction of the law as a whole, rather than to single forms of transgression. There is a summing up of the charges of vers. 21–22. It is difficult to decide whether this verse is a question, forming a climax to the interrogative charge, or an answer given by Paul himself to his own questions, vers. 21–22. The sense remains substantially the same whichever construction be accepted. The general similarity of form in the verses favors the usual view, but a slight variation in the original is urged in support of the affirmative construction. 'God' is dishonored because it is His law which they transgress. See next verse. 'Paul's argument strikes with equal force against all conduct, of Jews or Christians, which is inconsistent with profession, and which brings dishonor to God' (Beet).

Ver. 24. **For.** This word is not found in Is. 52: 5, the passage here quoted (from the LXX). Paul inserts it to show that he has applied the language in his own way. That he does not cite it as a fulfilled prophecy appears further from the unusual position of 'as it is written,' after the Old Testament words. This verse confirms the state-

25 tiles because of you, even as it is written. For circumcision indeed profiteth, if thou be a doer of the law: but if thou be a transgressor of the law, thy cir-

ment of ver. 23, that God was dishonored through the transgression of the law by the Jews, and is appropriate, whatever view be taken of the construction of that verse.—**The name of God**, etc. The original passage is: ‘and my name continually every day is blasphemed.’ The reference was to the dishonor put upon God’s name by the enslaving of the Jews: but, as already indicated, Paul applies the words to different circumstances.—**Among the Gentiles because of you**. (‘Through you’ is incorrect.) The LXX. has these words, though the order is different from that of the Apostle’s language. The sense of the verse is plain: ‘The Gentiles judged the religion of the Jews by the scandalous conduct of the Jews themselves, and were thus led to blaspheme their God, Jehovah. The Jews boasted of the law, and reflected disgrace on the lawgiver’ (Lange). For the Jews were ‘the Gentiles’ Bible.’ It was as true then as now, that ‘the greatest obstructors of the success of the Word, are those whose bad lives contradict their good doctrine’ (Henry).—**Even as it is written**. He had quoted the language of the Old Testament, but not in its historical application. Ezek. 36: 23 expresses Paul’s thought: ‘I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them.’

Ver. 25. **For circumcision**. The statement of vers. 23, 24, which summed up the charge against the sinful Jew, is now corroborated: ‘what I have said is true in spite of circumcision, for circumcision without the keeping of the law is of no avail; true circumcision and true Judaism are not outward matters, but of the heart’ (vers. 28, 29). This turn of thought is not abrupt, for the Jew would at once answer the preceding indictment by adducing his privilege as one circumcised. The naturalness of this defence appears from the constant tendency to deal in the same manner with the sacraments, and means of grace in general. The reference here is to the actual rite, which was a sign of membership in the people of God.—**Indeed profiteth**. This implies that the Jew would say: ‘my circumcision profits me, even if I am guilty as you charge.’—**If thou be a doer of the law**. The original points the constant practice to habitual obedience as a characteristic. Circumcision is the sign and seal of a covenant, and the covenant had for its condition, on the part of the Jew, the keeping of the law (Gen. 17: 1; Lev. 18: 5; Deut. 27: 26; Gal. 5: 3). A further use of circumcision is pointed out in chap. 4: 11; but here this does not come into view. Nor is perfect obedience suggested here, but rather such sincere and hearty obedience, as the pious Jew could and did render, prompted by trust in Jehovah, the covenant God, who gave blessings and promises to His people.—**Is become uncircumcision**. ‘Has lost, for thee, every advantage

26 circumcision is become uncircumcision. If therefore the uncircumcision keep the ordinances of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision? 27 and shall not the uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who with the letter and circumcision, art a transgressor of the law?

which it was de-signed to secure to thee over the uncircumcised, so that thou hast now no advantage over the latter, and art, just as he is, no member of God's people' (Meyer). The unholy Jew virtually becomes a Gentile. The same principle applies to Christian baptism, the initiatory rite of the New Dispensation; it avails nothing in itself, but becomes a ground of condemnation, if the baptized person violates the duties implied in the covenant of which it is the sign and seal.

Ver. 26. **If therefore.** The unholy Jew virtually becomes a Gentile (ver. 25), does not the obedient Gentile virtually become a Jew? —**The uncircumcision.** The Jewish expression for 'the uncircumcised;' comp. Gal. 2: 7.—**Keep the ordinances of the law.** 'Righteousness' is misleading here; the righteous requirements of the law are meant (comp. chap. 1: 32); *moral*, not ceremonial, for the chief ceremonial observance, circumcision, is necessarily excluded. Complete fulfilment of the law is not meant; nor is any hint given as to the way in which a Gentile could 'keep the ordinances of the law,' though, as Godet thinks, the Apostle probably had in mind the fulfilment of the ordinance of the law by Gentile Christians (comp. chap. 8: 4), not proselytes of the gate, as Philippi suggests.—**Shall not.** The form indicates that an affirmative answer is expected.—**His uncircumcision.** 'His' takes up the concrete idea of 'uncircumcision' in the previous clause.—**Be reckoned for circumcision.** The phrase is precisely the same as in the well-known one: 'reckoned for righteousness' (chap. 4: 3, 9, 22; Gal. 3: 6), except that here the future is used, probably pointing to the day of judgment. At that time the uncircumcised Gentile, who has kept the ordinances of the law, shall be regarded precisely as though he were circumcised, *i. e.*, as a member of God's covenant people.

Ver. 27. **And shall not the uncircumcision.** As in ver. 23, the main question here is, whether the verse is interrogative or affirmative. Here, however, the original is more decisively in favor of the affirmative than in the previous instance. We would then render: 'And the uncircumcision,' etc., . . . 'shall judge thee,' etc.—**Which is by nature, i. e.,** the Gentile; 'by nature' = by natural birth.—**If it fulfil the law,** lit., 'fulfilling the law,' but it introduces the condition more fully stated in ver. 26.—**Shall judge.** This verb stands in emphatic position. (Comp. Matt. 12: 41, 42, and similar passages.) The reference is not to the direct, but to the indirect, judgment of the last day, when the conduct of the Gentile will, by com-

28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circum-

parison, show the true moral attitude of the sinning Jew.—**Who with the letter and circumcision**, etc. ‘With’ refers to the circumstances in which the action takes place; ‘here according to the context: *in spite of which* the transgression takes place’ (Meyer). ‘Letter’ points to the law as written by God; there is no implied opposition to ‘spirit.’ ‘Circumcision’ points to the covenant obligation of the Jew to keep the law. Hence the aggravated guilt of one who *in such circumstances* is a transgressor of this law—for that the Mosaic law is meant is plain enough. The absence of the article here (in the original) ought to be conclusive against the notion that Paul omits the article only when he means ‘law’ in general.

Ver. 28. **For**. This introduces the proof of the previous positions, ver. 27.—**He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly**. This gives the sense of the original; but in this and the succeeding verse the construction is peculiar. The one who shows only the outward marks of a Jew is not a true Jew.—**Which is outward**. The same phrase just rendered ‘outwardly.’—**In the flesh**. This is a further explanation of ‘outward,’ and is to be taken literally.

Ver. 29. **Which is one inwardly**; in his secret inner life.—**And circumcision is that of the heart**, etc. The A. V. preserves the parallelism, which is not so marked, however, in the original. The difficult construction of the original has led to other renderings: ‘And circumcision is of the heart,’ etc.; ‘And circumcision of the heart *is* (resides, rests) in the spirit,’ etc. The sense remains substantially the same. Circumcision of the heart is demanded in the Old Testament. The same principle applies to baptism, the sign and seal of regeneration.—**In the spirit, not in the letter**. The ‘letter’ refers to the command, viewed as a written form, which required outward circumcision. But various explanations have been given of ‘spirit.’ (1.) The Holy Spirit, through whose power circumcision takes place. This is the preferable sense, agreeing with chap. 7: 6. (The exact reference is to the indwelling Holy Spirit. See Excursus under chap. 7.) (2.) The human spirit. Objectionable, since unless the human spirit is regenerated by the Holy Spirit, it does not form a proper contrast with ‘letter.’ (3.) Other views, the true spirit of the law, the true spirit of the Jew, etc. All these give to ‘spirit’ an unusual sense. Observe: Paul does not make an absolute antagonism between letter and spirit. He does not object to the rite which the ‘letter’ commanded. The Holy Spirit caused the ‘letter’ to be written; even in the indefinite sense so often given to spirit, there is no opposition, since we reach a knowledge of the spirit of a command through the letter. Most objectionable is the use of this qualified antithesis to make an antagonism between the literal and spiritual sense



cision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

### CHAPTER 3: 1-20.

#### *The Scriptural Proof of the Guilt of the Jews.*

What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what is

of Scripture.—**Whose praise**, etc. 'Whose' may be either neuter or masculine, referring to true Judaism and true circumcision, or, to the true Jew. The former is more grammatical. 'This praise is the holy satisfaction of God (His being *well pleased*), as He has so often declared it to the righteous in the Scriptures. Observe how perfectly analogous vers. 28, 29, in the tenor of thought, are to the idea of *the invisible church*' (Meyer). The whole section is a declaration that religious privilege (from birth, knowledge, ritual observance) increases the guilt of those whose morality does not correspond. This position does not detract from, but rather enhances our estimate of these privileges. 'What a remarkable parallelism, that of this whole passage with the declaration of Jesus (Matt. 8: 11, 12): "Many shall come from the east and the west," etc. Yet there is nothing whatever to indicate that Paul has imitated. The same truth has created for itself in each case an original form' (Godet). Here is the warrant for the Protestant distinction between the visible and the invisible church, and also between the church and the kingdom of God.

#### (3) *The Scriptural Proof of the Guilt of the Jews*, vers. 1-20.

This section forms the conclusion of the first part: 'Every one needs this power unto salvation.' While in general it may be regarded as presenting the Scriptural proof that the Jews are guilty, the train of thought is so involved, that it is rightly deemed one of the most difficult passages in the Epistle. The connection with chap. 2, is obvious: If true Judaism and circumcision are thus represented (chap. 2: 28, 29), what is the advantage of the Jew? etc. The positive advantage is the possession of the Scriptures; ver. 2. But the Apostle digresses to consider several misconceptions which may arise in view of this privilege of the Jew taken in connection with his guilt; vers. 3-8. The form is not strictly that of a dialogue between a Jewish objector and the Apostle, but the misconceptions are from a Jewish (or Jewish Christian) point of view. The want of faith on the part of some Jews cannot annul God's faithfulness, for God must be true (vers. 3, 4); if God's righteousness seems to be furthered by sin, God is not unjust in punishing it (vers. 5, 6); for this amounts to the abhorrent principle that it is right to do evil that good may come (vers. 7, 8). The main thought is then resumed in ver. 9, which restates the charge of sin against all men (set forth in chaps. 1 and 2). The Apostle, then, by abundant Scriptural citation (vers. 10-18), shows God's estimate of human character, and he applies this estimate to the Jews especially (ver. 19), reaching in ver. 20 the great principle which must be accepted before the need of the gospel is felt.

2 the profit of circumcision? Much every way: first of all, that they were intrusted with the oracles of 3 God. For what if some were without faith? shall

Ver. 1. **What advantage then**, etc. On the connection of thought, see above.—**The Jew**. Used generically for the Jews.—**The profit**, or, 'benefit,' of **circumcision**. This specification is naturally introduced in view of the previous discussion (chap. 2: 25-29).

Ver. 2. **Much every way**. This refers to both the preceding questions. 'Every way' means, under every moral and religious aspect whichever way you look at it.—**First of all**. This is more literal than 'chiefly' (comp. chap. 1: 8). The possession of the Old Testament was the chief advantage, but 'first of all' suggests that there were others which the writer does not name here (but details in chap. 9; 4, 5). The form of the original points to a 'secondly' which is omitted. (The word rendered 'because' is not found in the best authorities.)—**They were intrusted with**. This is the more exact rendering.—**The oracles of God**. 'Oracles,' lit., sayings, not limited to prophetic sayings. The Old Testament is meant. Even those writers who refer the phrase to the Messianic prophecies admit that these are found throughout the Old Testament, and that the possession of that book placed the 'oracles' in their trust. It clearly follows that the possession of the entire written revelation of God is to be deemed a greater privilege.

Ver. 3. **For what if**; as is the case, thus introducing the fact as an objection to be answered. Others divide the verse: 'For what? (*i. e.*, what is the case). If some,' etc. This turns the whole into a guarantee that the oracles are still intrusted to them. Both views are grammatical, but the usual one is preferable. Such objections would be addressed to the Apostle continually, as he labored, more or less assailed by Jewish opposition; while the confirmation of the fact of ver. 2 seems unnecessary.—**Some were without faith**. The emendations of this verse are designed to reproduce the verbal correspondence of the original. There are, however, two views of the sense: (1.) That the faithfulness of the Jews to their trust (ver. 2) is meant. (2) That unbelief in the Messiah is referred to. In favor of (1) are: the immediate context, both ver. 2, and the thought of God's 'faithfulness' which follows; the fact that the doctrine of faith has not yet become prominent. But in support of (2) may be urged the more usual sense of the words; the fact that God's dealings, as told in the Old Testament make the reference to 'unfaithfulness' superfluous; the digressive character of the passage, the casual connection between unbelief and disobedience recognized in the Bible (if they were unfaithful it was because they were without faith). We prefer (2), and find an objection growing out of the unbelief of the Jews *at that time*, which is more fully discussed in chaps. 9-11. The digression is then

4 their want of faith make of none effect the faithfulness of God? <sup>1</sup>God forbid: yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar; as it is written,

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Be it not so*: and so elsewhere.

into a region of thought where the Apostle's deepest feelings were concerned. A Jew might well raise such an objection, as if to say: 'But how do you reconcile this advantage with the rejection of the Messiah you preach?' As Lange remarks, the 'unbelievers always remain in the minority in real significance, let their number be ever so great.'—**Shall their want of faith**, etc. The original shows that a negative answer is expected—**The faithfulness of God**. The word used is 'faith,' but that it has here the sense of faithfulness is plain, from the Old Testament usage, and from the fact that no other sense is appropriately applied to God.

Ver. 4. **God forbid**. The expression is used in animated discussions, fourteen times by Paul (ten times in this Epistle), and elsewhere in the New Testament (Luke 20: 16). It is an indignant denial, including pious horror, and hence is equivalent to the English phrase 'God forbid,' to which, however, objection has been raised, both because it is not a translation of the Greek, and on account of the unnecessary use of the name of God. (See literal rendering in R. V. marg.)—**Yea, let God be found** (lit., 'become') **true**. The only question here is whether Paul refers to what God is, or what He is proven to be. The latter seems to accord better with the word 'become,' and suits the context best. Hence we explain: be seen and acknowledged, even by His enemies, to be truthful. His faithfulness is essential to His truthfulness: He cannot be found true, if men can make of none effect His faithfulness (ver. 3).—**But every man a liar**. Every man who is unfaithful is a liar, but the reference is to the recognition of the fact. 'Rather let us believe all men on earth to have broken their word and truth, than God His. Whatever becomes of men and their truth *His truth must stand fast*' (Alford).—**As it is written**. Ps. 51: 4; the penitential psalm written by David after the visit of Nathan (2 Sam. 12: 1-14). It is precisely the recognition of his sin as against God (see first part of Ps. 51: 4), that led David to add the passage here quoted. The quotation is from the LXX., which varies verbally from the Hebrew. As here used, it gives exactly the profound sense of the original.—**That**, *i. e.*, 'in order that' (both here and in the Psalm). This sense is essential to the train of thought. Man's sin is overruled for the glory of God (vers. 5-7), through it God's justice shines. The difficulty such a view always occasions is spoken of; thus proving that this is the sense.—**Thou**; *i. e.*, God, to whom David speaks.—**Mightest be justified**, *i. e.*, regarded as, declared, accounted righteous. The word, in the Old Testament, is frequently used of God, to whom no other sense is applicable. Indeed, no other sense suits the Old Testament usage in

That thou mightest be justified in thy words,  
And mightest prevail when thou comest into  
judgement.

5 But if our unrighteousness commendeth the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous

general; no other is admissible in the New. The sense 'make righteous' is indefensible on any ground but that of doctrinal prejudgment. Before the doctrine of justification by faith is introduced, Paul himself furnishes a key to his meaning, by retaining this technical term from the LXX., though it deviates from the Hebrew.—**In thy words**, what thou hast spoken, the 'oracles' just spoken of would come under this head.—**Mightest prevail**. The Hebrew is: 'be pure.' (A. V. 'be clean'). The reference in Paul's quotation, is to winning a law suit.—**When thou comest into judgement**. Hebrew: 'in thy judging' (A. V.: 'when thou judgest'). The passive (or middle) form here used may mean: 'when thou art judged,' 'when thou standest in judgment' (middle), *i. e.*, as the Judge, or, 'when thou comest into judgment,' disputest with men. The last sense preserves the parallelism, and is strictly grammatical. God is represented as humbling Himself to appear as a party in the judicial case, upholding His own righteousness so that He may prevail, be declared righteous. 'It is a mark of genuine piety to be disposed always to justify God, and to condemn ourselves' (Hodge). Thus the Apostle reaches this point: God's faithfulness cannot be made void; even the sin of men makes His truthfulness and faithfulness known. Here is the starting-point for a new objection.

Ver. 5. **But**, introducing the common objection. 'If God thus prevails, do we not, by our sin, help on His glory.' The answer to this objection follows (vers. 5-8). Paul admits the premise, but denies the conclusion.—**Our unrighteousness**. The opposite of 'righteousness;' here used quite generally.—**Commendeth**, or, 'establisheth.' The word having both senses. The former makes the objection stronger; here the stronger; in chap. 5: 8, where the word occurs again, both senses are suggested.—**The righteousness of God**. Here His character or attribute.—**What shall we say?** This phrase occurs several times in this Epistle, and was frequent among the Rabbins. 'It is a formula of meditation on a difficulty, a problem, in which there is danger of a false conclusion. It was also in use among the classical authors.' (Lange.) This is the preparation for the negative answer to the next question.—**Is God unrighteous**, etc. This is the unwarranted conclusion, which is denied by the very form of the question in the original. The emphasis rests on 'unrighteous,' which refers to His character as Judge (comp. vers. 6, 7).—**Who visiteth with wrath?** Lit, 'the wrath,' His acknowledged judicial wrath. The whole phrase is a designation of God, as One who is inflicting the wrath, and is not

who visiteth with wrath? (I speak after the manner of men.) God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world? <sup>1</sup>But if the truth of God through my lie

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *For*.

equivalent to, when He inflicts, etc.—**I speak after the manner of men.** This parenthetical clause is a third protest against the wrong conclusion, which is directly denied in ver. 6. He speaks as men would speak; the question is one he could not ask as a Christian, still less as an Apostle. 'I say this just as an ordinary man, not under the influence of the divine Spirit, may well say it' (Meyer). So that the phrase favors, instead of opposing, Paul's inspiration.

Ver. 6. **God forbid.** Exactly as in ver. 4.—**For then how,** for otherwise how, etc. The denial rests on the universally accepted truth that God will judge the world, all mankind. This the Apostle does not prove, but assumes as an accepted truth. The argument is: God will judge the world; to do this He must be righteous; therefore He cannot be unrighteous. The argument would hold with his readers. In fact, when men deny that God will judge the world, argument with them is useless. The principle, that God cannot be the author of sin which He judges, is not expressed, but underlies the whole argument (vers. 3-8).

Ver. 7. **But.** The authorities are quite evenly divided between the two readings (R. V. text and margin); 'but' is preferable, however, as the more difficult reading. 'The argument accordingly rests on the basis, that in the case put ("then" from ver. 6) the relation of God to the judgment of the world would yield two absurd consequences' (Meyer). 'For' presents this as Paul's argument; 'but,' as an objection met at once.—**The truth of God.** Comp. ver. 4. 'In the first instance, His veracity as involved in His threats and promises, and then those other attributes, especially justice, that are intimately connected with this' (Sanday).—**Through my lie.** The emphasis rests on this phrase (notice the emended order), which here refers to moral falsehood; comp. 'our unrighteousness' (ver. 5). Whether the objection comes from a Jew or Gentile has been much disputed. But as the argument is based on the fact that God will judge 'the world,' no special reference is necessary. (Weiss labors to show that the Apostle is here referring to his own preaching, which the Jews regarded as a 'lie.')

—**Abounded unto his glory.** Another form of the thought of ver. 5; but here something must be supplied: If this abounding unto His glory is a sufficient justification. The state of things at the day of judgment is in the hypothesis.—**Why** (if this is a sufficient justification, does He judge the world, and thus) **am I also** (I who thus glorify him) **still judged, i. e.,** at the day of judgment, **as a sinner?** The absurd consequence, as respects God, is that He has no right to judge man as a sinner, because man's falsehood glorifies His truth. The order we adopt places the

abounded unto his glory, why am I also still judged 8 as a sinner? and why not (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), Let us do evil, that good may come? whose condemnation is just.

9 What then? <sup>1</sup>Are we in worse case\* than they?

<sup>1</sup> Or, *do we excuse ourselves?*

\* Read *better* for *in worse case*, and omit the marg.—*Am. Com.*

emphasis on 'judged.' 'I' here is to be taken generally, as 'my' in the previous clause, although an application to the Jew is probably intended. 'Still,' *i. e.*, after the supposed result has occurred, furnishing the supposed excuse.

Ver. 8. **And why not.** This is parallel to 'why am I,' etc. (ver. 7). The second absurd consequence, as respects man, is the evil principle, so strongly condemned, as carrying its refutation with it. The construction would regularly be: and why not let us do evil, etc., but the mention of the false accusation leads to an irregularity. Some propose to avoid this by supplying: 'let us say.'—**Slanderously reported**; lit., 'blasphemed.' Such slander was in the last instance blasphemy, since thus God's character was outraged. Here the reference is to what they were reported as *doing*.—**Affirm that we say, Let us,** etc. The early Christians were charged with even asserting this false principle, which would have been worse than the previous charge. Men might do this without being so hardened as to adopt it as a doctrinal principle. The foundation of this slander was doubtless the doctrine of free grace, and the Christian non-observance of the Mosaic law. Similar slanderous and blasphemous inferences have frequently been made from Scriptural truth.—**Whose condemnation is just.** 'Whose,' *i. e.*, of those who practice and announce this evil principle, not the slanderers. 'Damnation' is too specific a rendering of the original word, which means 'condemnation' of any kind. The absurdity of the principle, that the end justifies the means, is not proven; the Apostle makes short work of an objection which has this logical issue. A doctrine directly leading to immoral results cannot belong to the gospel Paul is setting forth.

Ver. 9. **What then.** The Apostle now returns to his main argument, after the digression, which, however, is referred to in this question.—**Are we in worse case** (*Am. Com.*, **better**) **than they?** That 'we' refers to the Jews appears, from the whole argument, as well as from Paul's usage. But the exact meaning of the verb used (the only Greek word occurring in the question) has been much discussed. In the active voice it means, to hold before, then to surpass, to excel; in the middle, to hold before one's self, hence to put forward something as a defence, or excuse; in the passive, to be surpassed or preferred. The form here may be either middle or pas-

No, in no wise: for we before laid to the charge both 10 of Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin; as it is written,

There is none righteous, no, not one;

sive, but the former is uncommon in the New Testament. (1.) The usual explanation takes it as middle, with the meaning; 'have we any advantage' = 'are we better than they?' This suits the context admirably; in ver. 2, the advantage of the Jew was spoken of, but the digression (vers. 3, 8) may well be followed by the assertion that the Jew is no better. This explanation gives an active sense, but middle verbs frequently pass over into an active sense. (2.) Strictly middle: 'Do we put forward anything in our defence?' This is equivalent to 'do we excuse ourselves' (R. V. marg., which the Am. Com. reject). But this would require an object after the verb. (3.) Passive. (a.) 'Are we surpassed (by the Gentiles)?' A Jew would hardly ask such a question, which is moreover out of keeping with the context. This seems to be the interpretation implied in the rendering of the Eng. Com. ('in worse case'). (b.) 'Are we preferred (by God)?' But this also is opposed by the context, which treats of man's sin, not of God's power.—**No, in no wise.** The order of the Greek, however, gives us the more literal sense, 'not altogether,' not in all respects (one advantage has been named in ver. 2); but the common explanation is allowable and accords better with the context. There is no contradiction between 'much every way' (ver. 2) and this denial. The former refers to historical and external advantages, the latter to the moral result.—**For we before laid to the charge;** not 'proved' (A. V.) The word suggests a formal indictment. The charge was made in the previous part of the Epistle (chaps. 1: 18; 2: 29).—**Both Jews and Gentiles.** The charge had been made first against the Gentiles (chap. 1), then against the Jews (chap. 2), but the order is here reversed, since the argument is directed against the Jews.—**That they are all under sin.** While unregenerate, they are all under the power of sin (the notion of guilt is implied, but not expressed). 'All' is emphatic.

Vers. 10-18. **As it is written.** This formula here introduces a number of Old Testament quotations, describing the moral corruption of the times of David and the prophets. Human nature being essentially the same always and everywhere, the description holds good universally, but the application here is to the Jews first, afterwards to 'all the world' (ver. 19). In Ps. 14 the general application is most obvious, hence it is quoted first. 'The arrangement is such that testimony is adduced: 1st, for the *state* of sin generally (vers. 10-12); 2d, the *practice* of sin in word (vers. 13-14) and deed (vers. 15-17); and 3d, the sinful *source* of the whole (ver. 18)' Meyer.

Ver. 10. **There is none righteous,** etc. The citation from Ps. 14: 1-3 (covering here vers. 10-12) varies from the LXX., especially

- 11      There is none that understandeth,  
           There is none that seeketh after God ;
- 12      They are all turned aside, they are together be-  
           come unprofitable ;  
           There is none that doeth good, no, not so much  
           as one :
- 13      Their throat is an open sepulchre ;  
           With their tongues they have used deceit.  
           The poison of asps is under their lips :
- 14      Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness :

in this verse, which begins with the last clause of Ps. 14 : 1. Hebrew : 'there is not a doer of good,' LXX. : 'there is not (one) doing good, there is not even one.' 'Righteous' is substituted, to contrast with 'under sin.'

Ver. 11. **There is none that understandeth**, etc. Latter half of Ps. 14 : 2 ; 'so quoted that the *negative* sense which results indirectly from the text in the Hebrews and LXX. is expressed by Paul directly' (Meyer). As regards the meaning, both parts of the verse refer to impiety : sin being represented as folly, and then as failure to seek God.

Ver. 12. **They have all turned aside**, etc. Accurately quoted from Ps. 14 : 3 (LXX.).—**Unprofitable**. More literally, 'useless,' 'worthless.'—**No, not so much as one**. 'There is not even unto one.' The same form occurs in ver. 1 of the Psalm, from which ver. 10 here varies.

Ver. 13. **Their throat is an open sepulchre**. Quoted accurately from the Greek version of Ps. 5 : 9. The reference is to sinful speech. The figure is either from the noxious odor, or from the insatiableness of an open grave. In either case, the reference is to the *corrupting* character of the speech.—**They have used deceit**. Habitual, continued action is expressed. Hebrew : 'their tongues they make smooth.'—**The poison of asps**, etc. Accurately quoted from (LXX.) Ps. 110<sup>x</sup> : 3, latter half of the verse. The Hebrew is : 'poison of an adder ;' but the distinction between the two classes of venomous serpents is not maintained in the LXX. The reference is to the malice which is behind the cunning of their tongues. Perhaps the thought of the poison bag under the serpent's fangs suggests the figure.

Ver. 14. **Whose mouth**, etc. (From Ps. 10 : 7.) The variations from the LXX. are slight. The Hebrew is : 'His mouth is full of oaths, and deceit, and fraud.' 'Deceit,' which occurs in the original, was omitted, because already mentioned (ver. 3).—**Full of cursing and bitterness**. The bitterness which prompts the speech is the cause of the cursing.



- 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood :  
 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways :  
 17 And the way of peace have they not known :  
 18 And there is no fear of God before their eyes.  
 19 Now we know that what things soever the law

Vers. 15-17. **Their feet**, etc. Sinful doings are here described in a quotation from Is. 59 : 7, 8. There are some omissions, as will appear from the following rendering of the original passage in Hebrew :—

‘Their feet run to do evil,  
 And they haste to shed innocent blood  
 Their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity ;  
 Wasting and destruction are in their highways ;  
 A way of peace they have not known,  
 And there is no judgment in their paths.  
 Their paths they have made perverse for themselves ;  
 No treader in it hath known peace.’

The sense is plain ; they readily commit murder (ver. 15) ; wherever they go they produce destruction and misery (ver. 16) ; the one opposite way, that where men walk peacefully, is strange to them.

Ver. 18. **There is no fear of God**, etc. (From Ps. 36 : 1.) ‘The transgression of the wicked is affirming within my heart : “Fear of God is not before his eyes.”’ The quotation from the LXX. is exact. ‘Fear of God,’ reverence of Him, is here figuratively spoken of, as if it existed external to man, for a rule of life. Paul’s closing quotation reaffirms what the Scriptures everywhere teach, that the source of sin is a wrong attitude toward God ; not to fear God is to be (and become yet more) immoral.

Ver. 19. **Now we know**. As in chap. 2 : 2, a truth admitted by all his readers is thus introduced. The Apostle’s argument is that these Scripture passages must apply to the Jews as well as the Gentiles.—**The law saith**, *i. e.*, the Old Testament, as a whole ; not the Mosaic law alone, since other parts of Scripture have been cited. Regarded as a rule of life, the whole Old Testament is properly called ‘the law.’—**Speaketh**, speaks out, makes known by word—**Who are under the law** ; lit. ; ‘in the law,’ as in chap. 2 : 12 ; but the article is inserted here, since the argument turns on the specific reference to the Mosaic law.—**That**. ‘In order that.’ There is no necessity for weakening the exact sense. This was the purpose of God in thus speaking through the law. Through this conviction of the whole world the gospel was revealed (comp. Gal. 3 : 22, 23). Notice the correspondence with the thought which introduces this division of the Epistle (chap. 3 : 13) ‘for the wrath of God,’ etc.).—**Every mouth may be stopped**. Jew as well as Gentile. The reference is not to the final judgment, but to the more immediate effect of the law

sayeth, it speaketh to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgement of God: because 20 <sup>1</sup>by <sup>2</sup>the works of the law shall no flesh be <sup>3</sup>justified

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *out of*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *works of law*.

<sup>3</sup> Or, *accounted righteous*.

it cuts off every wrong ground of justification; every one is without excuse.—**All the world.** This is the positive side of the purpose. All men are here included.—**May be brought under the judgement of God.** This paraphrase brings out the sense, which includes more than 'guilty.' The whole world was to be convicted of guilt, proven obnoxious to punishment. To 'God' satisfaction—for sin is due.

Ver. 20. **Because.** The word here used means, in classical authors, 'therefore,' giving a conclusion from preceding statements; but the prevailing sense in the New Testament is 'because,' assigning a reason for what precedes. Taken in that sense here, it shows why this conviction of the whole world must be the result of God's speaking in the law. (This verse should not be separated by a period from ver. 19.)—**By the works of the law,** lit., 'from works of law.' But to refer 'law' to anything else than the Mosaic law is to weaken the passage greatly, and 'works,' as here defined is equivalent to 'the works,' in English. The Mosaic law, as a whole, is referred to; 'the whole revealed law as an undivided unity, yet with special regard to the moral law.' A reference to the ceremonial law alone is forbidden by the last clause of the verse. The verse admits of an application to law in general; but to regard this as the primary thought is contrary to the scope of the Apostle's argument. 'Works of the law' are works required by the law, in harmony with the law, 'good works,' as they are popularly termed. Some (the Roman Catholic expositors, etc.) refer the phrase to works *produced* by the law, *i. e.*, without the impulse of the Holy Spirit. But this distinction implies that works wrought by the power of the Holy Spirit may be a ground of justification, which confuses the latter with sanctification.—**No flesh.** The word 'flesh' is here used in the Old Testament sense: human being, with the added notion of frailty; as we say, no mortal man. The New Testament gives it an ethical sense, which will be discussed hereafter. In Ps. 143: 2, which resembles this clause, we find 'no man (or, no one) living.' The negative in the original is joined with the verb, but in English we must translate, 'no flesh.'—**Justified,** *i. e.*, accounted righteous. This is the obvious sense in the parallel passage in the Psalm. Indeed, this is the usual (probably the exclusive) sense in the New Testament. Modern scholarship confirms the view of the Protestant reformers on this point. (See Excursus below)—**In his sight.** The reference is to God's verdict, but not necessarily at the last judgment. The passage affirms that it is morally impossible for any man at any time to be declared righteous in God's judgment, by

in his sight: for <sup>1</sup>through the law *cometh* the knowledge of sin.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *through law.*

his doing what God's law has prescribed. Perfect compliance with the law would entitle a man to such a verdict (chap. 2: 13); but the Apostle thus far has been proving that all men are sinners, and that God purposed to convict them as sinners (ver. 14). Now he affirms this must be the first result of the revelation through the law, *because* by the works of the law justification is impossible for every man. 'No man, even with an outwardly faultless observance of the law (comp. on Phil. 3: 6), is in a position to offer to it that full and right obedience, which alone would be the condition of a justification independent of extraneous intervention; in fact, it is only through the law that man comes to a clear perception and consciousness of his moral imperfection by nature (his unrighteousness)' (Meyer).—**For through the law cometh the knowledge of sin.** The word rendered 'knowledge' means full knowledge, recognition, etc. Men without the law have some sense of sin; but only through the law does man properly recognize the sinfulness of sin (comp. chap. 7: 13). This sentence of Paul, taken in connection with Gal. 3: 24, 25, contains the whole philosophy of the law as a moral educator. This is the second use of the law, according to the old Protestant Divines. The first was political; the second, convincing (pedagogical); the third, didactic, regulating the life of a believer (comp. the German: *Zügel, Spiegel, Riegel*; restraint, mirror, rule). Notice that this last clause confirms the usual view of 'law' and 'justify.' At the same time it forms an appropriate conclusion to the first division of the Epistle. All need the gospel as God's power unto salvation, for the knowledge of sin, not 'righteousness from God,' comes through the law. Thus, too, the way is opened for the positive statement of the next division, which shows that righteousness from God comes by faith.

## CHAPTER 3: 21—4: 25.

### II. RIGHTEOUSNESS FROM GOD IS BY FAITH.

The R. V. (Eng. Com.) has failed to mark the second division of the Epistle at this point. The Am. Com. insisted throughout upon beginning a paragraph at ver. 21.—The theme of this second main division of the doctrinal part of the Epistle may be found in ver. 21: (1.) The righteousness of God apart from the law has been made manifest (*i. e.*, a righteousness by faith), and (2.) this is attested by the law and the prophets. Chap. 3: 22-31 expands the former idea; chap. 4 the latter. 1. Righteousness from God comes independently of the law, by faith in the atoning Saviour (vers. 21-26); hence the universality of its application (vers. 27-30), establishing the law; for 2. Abraham was justified by faith, being the father of believers, uncircumcised as well as circumcised (chap. 4: 1-25). The whole division is based upon the evangelical idea of justification; and in chap. 3: 23-26 we have presented to us the

## CHAPTER 3: 21-31.

*Righteousness from God is to all, Jew and Gentile, by Faith.*

21 \*But now apart from the law a righteousness of God

\* Begin a paragraph at ver. 21.—*Am. Com.*

doctrine of justification by free grace through faith in Christ, in its inseparable connection with the atonement as its objective basis. We therefore insert here the following Excursus.

## THE WORD JUSTIFY AND KINDRED TERMS.

The word 'justify,' in Greek as well as English, is derived from the adjective meaning just or righteous. In the Bible, however, this is a religious idea, involving conformity to God's will or law, and not a purely ethical one. The verb, according to its etymology, in both languages, would mean: to make righteous, but it passes over in actual use into the sense: to account righteous, having a forensic or declarative meaning. The question is: which meaning does it have in the New Testament? There ought to be little doubt that the latter sense is that exclusively intended in the New Testament, especially by the Apostle Paul.

1. The verb had this declarative sense in classical Greek, before the Hellenistic usage was formed.

2. It is frequently used in the LXX., and in all but two or three cases the declarative sense is preferable; in many instances (as where God is said to be justified; and where judicial verdicts are spoken of) it is the only possible one.

3. Not only is the Hebrew usage fairly reproduced in the LXX., but the Hebrew notion of 'righteous,' pointing to God's will as the standard, God's estimate as the decisive one, would lead us to expect the word to take on a technical forensic sense, during the two centuries in which the peculiarities of New Testament Greek were fully developed.

4. In the New Testament the declarative sense is appropriate in every instance. (Rev. 22: 11 might have been an exception, but the correct reading gives another form.) On the other hand, while there are passages in which the sense 'make righteous' could be appropriate, in the majority of instances such a meaning is impossible. The word occurs thirty-nine times in the New Testament, twenty-seven times in Paul's Epistles, mostly in close argumentation. To suppose that he used the term indefinitely, is to cast contempt on all his writings. Already in his speech at Antioch, in Pisidia (Acts 13: 39), he used it in a strictly declarative sense, as well known to his hearers. All the phenomena, philological and historical, point to a definite, technical sense, and that the sense upheld by Protestants generally. A comparison of the passages will confirm to the English reader this view. See any good Concordance.

To *justify*, then, denotes an act of jurisdiction, the pronouncing of a verdict, not the infusion of a quality. When God justifies, He accounts as righteous, treats as righteous. That He will make righteous those whom He accounts righteous, follows from His character, not from anything in the character of justification itself. It is 'an act of God's free grace,' bestowed without any merit of ours, on the *objective* ground of the

hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and

perfect righteousness of Christ, as apprehended, and thus made *subjective* by a living faith (see ver. 25). The doctrine of justification may be distinguished from the broader and deeper doctrine of a life-union with Christ, but must not be sundered from it. The same grace which justifies does also renew, regenerate, and sanctify; faith and love, justification and sanctification, are as inseparable in the life of the Christian, as light and heat in the rays of the sun. The distinction is necessary, however, for it is expressly made in Scripture, and is of the greatest importance in preaching the gospel.

5. The history of Christian experience confirms the philological result. In this view was found the practical power of the Reformation. It turns the sinner away from his own doing to seek salvation outside of himself; when joined with the atonement of Christ, it gives peace to his conscience; it comforts the believer continually, giving an ever-fresh motive to holy living, which is the *consequence*, not the *cause*, of justification. Notice, too, that everywhere justification is spoken of as an act, not a continuous work. The tenses chosen by Paul indicate this. The only apparent exception is in this verse, where a present participle (implying continuous action) is used; but here the continuity is in the persons who are justified, and not in the act in the case of each. Comp. the full notes, philological and doctrinal, of Dr. Schaff in Lange, *Romans*, pp. 130 ff., 138 ff.

1. *Righteousness from God is to all, Jew and Gentile, by Faith*, vers. 21-31.

This section opens (ver. 21) with the statement of the theme of this division, as contrasted with ver. 20; vers. 22-26 set forth this way of faith, grounding justification upon the propitiatory death of Christ; vers. 27-30 show that Jewish boasting is excluded, the same God justifies believing Jew and Gentile; the law is not made of none effect, but established, by this method (ver. 31); the last thought furnishes a transition to the case of Abraham (chap. 4.).

Ver. 21. **But now.** Either, 'at this time,' *i. e.*, in the gospel dispensation, or, 'in this state of things,' *i. e.*, as further defined. The latter is preferable.—**Apart from the law.** Though the article is wanting, there can be no question that the Mosaic law is meant. This phrase should come first, as in the Greek, for emphasis; and further to prevent the ungrammatical connection with 'righteousness of God,' which some advocate. It qualifies the verb 'manifested,' and means not, 'without the law,' as if that had no existence and no office to perform, but independently of the law: the manifestation has been without its aid.—**A righteousness of God.** As in chap. 1: 17, the article is wanting. The meaning here is precisely as there, a righteousness which proceeds from God; it is given to the believer for Christ's sake in the act of justification. It is here characterized by a series of antitheses; independent of the law, yet authenticated by the law and the prophets (ver. 21); freely bestowed on the believer, yet fully paid for by the redemption price of Christ (ver. 24); intrinsically holy, yet justifying the sinner (ver. 26); thus God is displayed as Himself the righteous ruler of the universe and the merciful Father

22 the prophets : even the righteousness of God through  
 faith <sup>1</sup> in Jesus Christ unto all <sup>2</sup> them that believe ; for  
 23 there is no distinction ; for all have sinned,\* and fall

<sup>1</sup> Or, of.

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities add *and upon all*.

\* Gr. *sinned*.—*Am. Com.*

who provides free salvation.—**Hath been manifested.** This revelation of righteousness is set forth as an accomplished and still continued fact. It was not thus known before, and it is now known independently of the law.—**Being witnessed.** Continuously witnessed in the Old Testament Scriptures. This is not a contradiction to ‘apart from the law.’ The revelation having been made in the gospel, it turns out that the Old Testament attests what its legal requirements did not and could not make known. While the law could not justify (ver. 20), there is no contradiction between the parts of God’s revelation. The unity of God, on which he bases his argument in ver. 29, might be used to enforce the principle here set forth ; indeed, chap. 4 forms the proof of this clause.

Ver. 22. **Even the righteousness of God through faith**, or, ‘a righteousness, however (mediated), through faith’ (Meyer) ; the article being omitted, as in ver. 21, before ‘righteousness.’ There is a contrast implied between ‘righteousness of God in general, and this specific form.’—**In Jesus Christ.** Lit., ‘of Jesus Christ,’ but as He is the object of faith, the proper English expression is ‘in.’ To explain the whole phrase of Christ’s faithfulness to us, or of faith produced by Him, is opposed to Paul’s usage.—**Unto all them that believe.** This briefer reading (R. V. text) is supported by the four oldest manuscripts ; the longer reading (A. V. and R. V. marg.) presents the added sense of ‘extending over.’ That this righteousness does not come to all, appears from the qualifying phrase ‘that believe’—**For there is no distinction.** This assigns the reason for what precedes. There is no other way for any ; all must believe, in order to obtain this righteousness. There may be no other points of difference among men, but as respects this point there is ‘no distinction’ made in God’s dealing with them.

Ver. 23. **For all have sinned.** The Greek tense points to the historical fact ; they became sinners. For this reason there is no distinction. ‘Have sinned,’ is not altogether objectionable, since it implies a relation to what precedes.—**Fall short.** As the result of their having become sinners.—**Glory of God.** This is variously explained as, glory before God, glory like God (in His image, showing His glory), glory from God. The last is preferable ; His approval is meant (although it is true this glory *from Him alone can stand before Him*), since the next verse closely joins the thought of justification. Civilization, refinement, intelligence, and external morality have not made these words less universal in their application.

24 short of the glory of God; being justified freely by  
 his grace through the redemption that is in Christ  
 25 Jesus; whom God <sup>1</sup>set forth\* <sup>2</sup>to be a propitiation,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *purposed*.

\* Omit *mag.*<sup>1</sup>—*Am. Com.*

<sup>2</sup> Or, to be *propitiatory*.

Ver. 24. **Being justified.** The present tense points, not to continuous justification of the individual, but to an action continuous as respects those spoken of in (vers. 22, 23). Because they are all in this condition (fallen short of the glory of God), if they are justified *it is* in this way, namely, **freely**, as a gift, not by their own merit.—**By his grace.** God's grace, *i. e.*, His unmerited favor, His love to the sinner, is the *efficient* cause of justification; this led to the *objective* means: **through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.** The word 'redemption' means first of all, release or deliverance of captives from a state of misery or danger by the payment of a *ransom* as an equivalent. This idea of a ransom price paid is the essential one in the figurative expression, and the connection not only forbids every attempt at explaining it away, but points to the historical person who paid the ransom (Christ Jesus) as well as to the ransom itself (the death of Christ). Of course the widest sense of redemption includes a number of blessed truths; but the reference here is specific, and the idea of the payment of a price is confirmed by a number of similar expressions in the New Testament. Freedom from sin is the consequence of the 'redemption' here spoken of, but 'the redemption' itself is an essential part of the *work of Christ*. Hence the redemption is said to be *in* Him, not through Him; the next verse clearly shows that the reference is to His vicarious death. 'Every mode of conception, which refers redemption and the forgiveness of sins not to a real atonement through the death of Christ, but subjectively to the dying and reviving with Him guaranteed and produced by that death, is opposed to the New Testament,—a mixing up of justification and sanctification.' (Meyer.)

Ver. 25. **Whom.** The personal Redeemer Christ Jesus stands immediately connected with justification; how is here declared (vers. 25, 26).—**God set forth.** One historical fact is spoken of. The meaning 'purposed,' which the original word has, is inappropriate because the purpose is expressed in detail afterwards. 'Publicly set forth for himself' is the full sense of the term here.—**To be a propitiation.** One word in the original, but something must be supplied in English: 'as,' 'for,' 'to be,' have been suggested, the last being preferable, because a *fact* is referred to. The Greek word is strictly an adjective, meaning 'propitiatory,' but is used in the LXX. as a noun, usually referring to the mercy-seat (*kapporeth*), the lid of the ark of the covenant; in this sense it occurs in Hebrews 9: 5; the only other instance of its use in the New Testament. Explanations have been suggested: (1.) *Mercy-seat*; but this confuses metaphors; the mercy-seat was hidden, not set forth; the article is

through <sup>1</sup> faith, by his blood,\* to shew his righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; for

<sup>1</sup> Or, *faith in his blood.*

\* Read *through faith, in his blood,* and omit marg.<sup>1</sup>—*Am. Com.*

wanting; the figure is nowhere else applied to Christ, and the mercy-seat was designed to show God's grace, not 'to show his righteousness.' (2.) In consequence of these objections we prefer to explain 'a propitiatory sacrifice,' either taking the word in that sense, or supplying the noun. This amounts to the same as the other explanation, but is not open to the same objections. (3.) 'To be propitiatory;' but there is no instance of the adjective being applied to persons. (4.) 'As propitiator;' this is open to the same objection. (5.) 'As a means of propitiation;' this is too abstract, though defended by Weiss. It will be noticed that all explanations rest on the thought that Christ's death was sacrificial and expiatory; that it was a real atonement, required by something in the character of God, and not merely designed to effect moral results in man. We may not know all that this 'propitiation' involves, but since God Himself was willing to institute a system of types and an extended ritual service, designing thereby to educate His people respecting this reality, we ought to know something definite and positive respecting it. The atoning death of Christ is the ground of the 'reconciliation' (wrongly translated 'atonement' in chap. 5: 11), since it satisfies the demand of Divine justice on the one hand, and on the other draws men to God. Independently of the former, the latter could not be more than a groundless human feeling.—**Through faith, by (in) his blood.** A comma is inserted after 'faith,' because the word translated 'in' is never joined with 'faith,' and because the important phrase 'in His blood,' is made too subordinate by the ordinary punctuation. 'By' is far less exact than 'in.' Further, faith in Christ is more than faith in His blood, (A. V. and marg. of Eng. Com.), hence the Am. Com. prefer to render as indicated above, without adding any margin. We join 'in His blood' with 'set forth,' etc. This setting forth of Christ as a propitiatory sacrifice took place in the shedding of His blood. The entire thought is purely expiatory; the figure is that of doing away guilt by blood; the reality is the atoning death of Christ, which actually removes the guilt of sin. 'Through faith,' (lit., 'the faith,' pointing to 'faith' already mentioned in ver. 22) may be connected either with 'propitiation,' so that it indicates how this propitiation becomes effective, or with 'set forth,' etc. The former is perhaps preferable, since the propitiation could hardly be said to be set forth through faith. The notion that 'faith' here means Christ's faithfulness is altogether unwarranted.—**To shew,** lit., 'unto the shewing,' or, demonstration.—**His righteousness.** God's judicial (or punitive)



26 the shewing, *I say*, of his righteousness at this

righteousness. His retributive justice is meant; the death of Christ shows how he hates sin, while He saves sinners. The rest of the verse, when fairly interpreted, opposes the various other interpretations — **Because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime.** The A. V. is misleading. This clause gives, not the design, but the *occasion*, of the showing of God's righteousness; 'passing over' is not the same as 'remission.' God had allowed the sins of the race which were committed before Christ's death ('sins done aforetime'), to pass by without full punishment. He had not forgiven them; the wrath that appeared (comp. chap. 1: 17) was not a sufficient punishment; His passing over these sins obscured His righteousness. The death of Christ as an atoning sacrifice showed what His righteousness demanded, while it effected pardon and justification. That this is the correct view, appears not only from ver. 26, but from the next clause: **in the forbearance of God**, which explains the 'passing over.' Remission is a matter of 'grace;' 'passing over,' of 'forbearance.' To refer the latter part of this verse to actual pardon under the Old Testament dispensation is contrary to the obvious sense of the words, however true it is that the Old Testament saints had remission of sins.

Ver. 26. **For the shewing.** The noun is the same as in ver. 25, but a different preposition has been chosen, perhaps for euphony. This verse, however, points more to the historical demonstration, ver. 25 to the purpose.—**Righteousness**, as in ver. 25.—**At this present season**, when the historical demonstration has taken place, in contrast with 'aforetime,' not with 'in the forbearance of God.'—**That he might himself be.** This is the purposed result, the final aim of the whole transaction. 'Himself' gives an emphasis to the fact that it is the personal God whose character is to be displayed; this alone is a fitting end. 'Might be,' in this connection, is equivalent to 'might be shown and seen to be;' but it does not refer merely to the human estimate. What God did (ver. 25), actually had as its purpose and result that He was **just and the justifier**, etc. Not just and condemning, but 'just and justifying' (the comma after 'just' is unnecessary). By setting forth Christ, in His blood, as a propitiation, to be appropriated by faith, God not only demonstrated His judicial righteousness which had been obscured in past ages, but also and mainly He accomplished this purpose and result, that His own character was displayed, as just and justifier, as righteous and accounting righteous him that hath faith in Christ. Not one without the other; not one in contrast with the other; but both in harmony. Every notion of making righteous confuses and weakens the whole passage, but especially in this phrase. God could not show Himself righteous in any simpler way than by *making* men righteous; the gospel paradox is that He is righteous and accounting righteous believing sinners. The fact that 'righteousness' in the immediate context refers to God's judicial righteousness, as well as the leading thought of 'propitiation,'

present season: that he might himself be <sup>1</sup>just, and the <sup>1</sup>justifier of him that <sup>2</sup>hath faith <sup>3</sup>in Jesus.  
 27 Where then is the glorying? It is excluded. By what manner of law? of works? Nay: but by a

<sup>1</sup> See ch. 2: 13, margin.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *is of faith.*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *of.*

combine with the lexical requirements of the passage itself in warranting the statement, that every reference to sanctification is a gratuitous importation, the result of theological prejudgment. Plain facts in the history of God's people warrant the further assertion, that such an importation ultimately leads away from God's method of sanctification. —**Of him that hath faith in Jesus** (see the more literal renderings in the margin), him whose essential characteristic is faith. The object of this faith is 'Jesus,' called here by His human name, probably with tender emphasis. At the close of this profound passage our thoughts are led back to the personal Redeemer. In the death of Christ, God punished sin and saved the sinner; Divine justice was vindicated in the culminating act of redeeming love. The Son voluntarily, and in accordance with the *holy* love of the Father, assumed the whole curse of sin, and, as the representative Head of the human family, in its stead and for its benefit, satisfied the demands of Divine justice. His sacrifice was a real propitiation, in contrast with the types of the Old Testament. The design was that God might righteously account the believer righteous. To this view, the only one exegetically defensible, it has been objected that it seems to conflict with morality, that God's design is to make men holy; but the sufficient answer is, that the sacrificial death of Christ has taught most of God's righteousness, that God's freely accounting men righteous has done most to make them righteous.

Ver. 27. **Where then is the glorying?** We have here an inference ('then') vivaciously set forth in question and answer. In view of this manifestation of God's righteousness apart from the law, the Jew cannot boast. Such a scheme prevents any glorying; but the immediate reference to the Jew is clear from the context, as well as the use of the article. The Jewish attitude was well known, and formed a great hindrance to the preaching of Paul; hence the question is not abrupt. 'Glorying' would cover both the good and bad senses of the Greek term, which, however, has here the bad sense, namely, 'boasting.' In chap. 4: 2 another, but similar, word is used. —**By what manner of law?** This refers to the exclusion, which must have taken place according to some rule or principle revealed by God; 'law' being here used in its widest sense, of any expression of the will of God.—**A law of faith;** *i. e.*, a law that requires faith. 'The contrast is not here between the law and the gospel as two dispensations, but between the law of works and the law of faith, whether found under the law or the gospel, or (if the case admitted) anywhere else. This is evident by the Apostle proving below that *Abraham was*

28 law of faith. <sup>1</sup> We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from <sup>2</sup> the works of the law.  
 29 Or is God *the God* of Jews only? is he not *the God* of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also: if so be  
 30 that God is one, and he shall justify the circumcision

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *For we reckon.*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *works of law.*

*justified*, not by works, so as to have whereof to boast, but by faith' (Alford). 'If we were saved by our own works, we might put the crown upon our own heads. But the law of faith, the way of justification by faith, doth forever exclude boasting . . . therefore it is most for God's glory, that thus we should be justified' (Matthew Henry).

Ver. 28. **We reckon therefore.** The R. V. puts in the text the reading of B, C, and most later authorities. The marginal reading is supported by Aleph, A, D, Vulgate, etc., accepted by Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort (text). The latter suggests the reason for the previous assertion: Glorifying is excluded by the law of faith, for (we have already proved and hence) we reckon, etc. The common reading makes this verse an inference. 'Reckon' is the word usually so rendered; 'conclude' is incorrect in any case.—**By faith apart from the works of the law.** This principle has already been established (vers. 21-26); and is re-stated here to furnish a basis for the argument against the pride of the Jew. Luther here adds 'alone,' and the phrase 'faith alone' has been a watchword of evangelical Protestantism. Certainly, the context excludes every other ground of justification, and because it does there was no necessity for Paul's writing 'alone,' or for our inserting it. The emphasis rests on 'faith,' which 'is the alone instrument of justification; yet it is not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love' (Westminster Confession). On 'works of the law,' see ver. 20.

Ver. 29. **Or is God the God of Jews only?** 'Or,' which is omitted in the A V., presents an alternative, in case the principle of ver. 28 should be doubted. 'Belong to Jews only' is the full sense. The Jews made this claim, and it would hold good, if justification were by works of the law, since the Jews alone possessed the law.—**Yea, of Gentiles also.** Paul's position as an Apostle to the Gentiles, the revelation of the universality of the gospel made to him, confirmed the promise of the Old Testament (chap. 1: 1-5). Hence all this establishes the position of ver. 28, that a man is justified by faith.

Ver. 30. **If so be that God is one,** etc. A slight change of reading gives the sentence a lively argumentative form; the word used being the same as in chap. 8: 9. The argument is pressed further to the undoubted fact 'that God is one.' 'The unity of God implies that He is God, not merely of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles; for otherwise another special Deity must rule over the Gentiles, which

<sup>1</sup> by faith, and the uncircumcision <sup>2</sup> through faith.  
 31 \* Do we then make <sup>3</sup> the law of none effect <sup>4</sup> through  
 faith? God forbid: nay, we establish the law.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *out of*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *through the faith*.

<sup>3</sup> Or, *law*.

<sup>4</sup> Or, *by*.

\* Make a paragraph of ver. 31.—*Am. Com.*

would do away with monotheism' (Meyer). But the unity of God's being involves the uniformity of His method of justification. If God is one, there can be no contradictory revelations from God; hence Christianity, based equally with Judaism upon monotheism, cannot admit of being one among several religions equally true.—**The circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith;** lit., 'the faith.' The change from 'by faith' to 'through faith,' may not have been designed to express any distinction, as Paul frequently uses the two phrases, 'by faith' and 'through faith,' as if they were equivalent. Some distinguish the former, as giving the general ground of justification (as opposed to that of works); the latter, the particular means, through his faith (as opposed to want of faith). To make the former imply a different position on the part of the Jew, is to oppose the whole current of Paul's thought.

Ver. 31. **Do we then make the law of none effect through faith?** This verse may be regarded either as the proposition of chap. 4, or as the conclusion of the preceding argument. It is both in fact, being a transition from the doctrine of justification by faith to the proof that Abraham was thus justified. The objection to making it begin the next chapter is the form of ver. 1 (which see). But the *Am. Com.* properly place it in a separate paragraph. The article is wanting with the word 'law,' but the reference to the Mosaic law is unmistakable.—**God forbid.** The Apostle indignantly denies that faith abrogates the law, as might be objected.—**Nay;** or, 'but on the contrary,' **we establish the law,** cause the law to stand. Not as a ground of justification, but as itself teaching justification by faith, the next chapter giving the historical proof. This is the main point here, although there are many other reasons which might be urged in support of the statement as a general one. The law was never intended as a means of justification; it could not therefore be abrogated by such a means. In its typical character it has fulfilled its purpose; as to its moral contents, as the expression of the holy will of God, as a rule of conduct, it was perfectly fulfilled by Christ and is constantly fulfilled in the holy life of a believer.

## CHAPTER 4: 1-25.

*Proof from the case of Abraham, that Righteousness is by Faith.*

1 What then shall we say <sup>1</sup> that Abraham, our fore-

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *of Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh?*

2. *Proof from the case of Abraham, that Righteousness is by Faith, vers. 1-25.*

The principle of faith, as the universal one, does not make void the law. In the truest sense it is by this principle that 'we establish the law' (chap. 3: 31). As regards Abraham himself, the ancestor of the Jews (ver. 1), the Scripture teaches that he was justified by faith (vers. 2-5); this accords with what David says of free forgiveness (vers. 6-8) as well as with the fact that Abraham was justified while yet uncircumcised, and thus became the father of believers, uncircumcised and circumcised alike (vers. 9-12); furthermore the promise of the inheritance of the world came through the righteousness of faith, not through the law (vers. 13-17). This is further set forth by a description of Abraham's faith in God's omnipotence (vers. 18-22); the whole matter being applied to the case of all believers in Christ (vers. 23-25). Comp. throughout the similar argument in Gal. 3.

Ver. 1. **What shall we say then?** 'Then' connects with what precedes, but the exact reference is open to discussion. Meyer and others take it as introducing a proof of chap. 3: 31, which they consider the proposition of chap. 4. The objection is that Paul is proving, not the agreement of the law and the gospel, but the true method of justification. It seems better to take ver. 31 as a transition thought, which is illustrated in this chapter, and taken up again in chap. 6, and to find here a proof of the positions set forth in chap. 3: 28-30, to which exception might be taken in view of the Divine origin of the law.—**Our forefather.** This is the better supported reading.—**According to the flesh.** This may mean, according to natural descent, or it may have the ethical sense, according to his sinful human nature (see chap. 7). In the former case it must be connected with 'forefather,' in the latter with 'hath found.' The order of the common Greek text favors the latter; while the best authorities sustain a different order, which throws the emphasis upon 'hath found,' but separates it from 'according to the flesh.' It is possible, however, to join it with the verb, even while accepting this reading, and the Am. Com. give the preference to this view of the construction (so Weiss also, while accepting the better supported reading). The sense then is: what shall we say then that Abraham our forefather hath found (*i. e.*, attained) according to the flesh (*i. e.*, through his own natural efforts as distinct from the grace of God). The opposite would be 'according to the Spirit,' according to the working of the Spirit of God. This evidently suits the context much better than the other

2 father according to the flesh, hath found? \* For if Abraham was justified <sup>1</sup> by works, he hath whereof to 3 glory; but not toward God. For what saith the

\* Read *hath found according to the flesh*, with marg. *according to the flesh, hath found?*  
—*Am. Com.*

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *Out of.*

view, which merely adds a seemingly unnecessary definition to the word 'forefather.' (The margin of the Eng. Com. refers to the reading of B, which omits 'hath found.')

Ver. 2. **For if Abraham was justified by works.** It is assumed that he was justified, but the Jews held the opinion that he was justified by works. Notice that even in their view, justification was a matter where God's verdict was concerned.—**Whereof to glory** (not the same word as in chap. 3: 27); comp. Gal. 6: 4, where the same phrase occurs.—**But not toward God.** The best explanation of this concisely expressed passage is: 'If Abraham, as the Jews suppose, was justified by works, he has reason to glory toward God (for he could claim justification from God as "of debt"), but he has no ground of glorying toward God (and hence was not justified by works), for the Scripture says he was justified by faith (ver. 3).' Some commentators, however, following the Greek fathers, take the clause: 'but not toward God,' as implying that his justification by faith gives him a ground of glorying toward God, but the supposed justification by works would give him only a ground of glorying toward men, God having nothing to do with it except to acknowledge it as justly earned. The objections to this view are that ver. 3 would then contain a refutation introduced by 'but,' not 'for;' that it is not like Paul to admit any ground of glorying toward men, much less toward God, in connection with the matter of justification.

Ver. 3. **For what saith the scripture?** This introduces the Scriptural proof of the fact that Abraham has no ground of glorying toward God, and hence of the main position that the Old Testament teaches that justification is by faith. The passage quoted is Gen. 15: 6, cited also in Gal. 3: 6; Jas. 2: 23; but the A. V. varies the form in each case. The New Testament citations all follow the LXX.: **And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness** (Heb.: 'And He reckoned it to him for righteousness'). The saying was with reference to the promise of an heir, as detailed in vers. 17-22. This believing was reckoned unto Abraham for righteousness. The word we translate 'reckon' occurs eleven times in this chapter, and is represented in the A. V. by 'count,' 'reckon,' 'impute;' elsewhere in this Epistle by 'account' (so Gal. 3: 6). The idea of putting to one's account is obvious; and the full expression is a technical one, the equivalent of God's act of justification. 'That is transferred to the person and imputed to him, which in and for itself does not belong to him' (Cremer, *Bib. Lexicon*).

scripture? And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but as of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his

The following explanations attempt to avoid this sense: his faith was taken into account with a view to making him righteous; his faith being a new principle of obedience, was regarded as already a complete righteousness; he was justified on account of the merit of his faith, not through his faith. But all these are opposed to the proper sense of 'reckon' as well as to that of the entire phrase. Furthermore, they are opposed not only to the line of Paul's argument, but to the facts of spiritual experience: the confusion of justification and sanctification has invariably, sooner or later, led to a decrease of holiness. As respects the character of Abraham's faith, it differs from Christian faith, as the promise differs from the fulfilment of the Gospel salvation, and as hope differs from fruition; but the essential element in both is unconditional trust in God's truth and mercy. How far Abraham, in thus believing, had faith in a Messiah, we cannot tell. In any case, his faith was not a purely subjective matter; it rested upon God, real and revealed, as its object, and the contents of his faith would correspond with the extent of the revelation. It is not for us, who have the personal Lord Jesus Christ as the object of our faith, to use the case of Abraham as a proof that one can have Christian faith and yet reject Him. Meyer goes so far as to say: 'Abraham's faith had reference to the divine *promise*, and indeed to the promise which he, the man trusted by God and enlightened by God, recognized as that which embraced in it the future *Messiah* (John 8: 56).' In the case of the Christian, the object of faith is the personal Messiah, the contents of faith respect His person and work. One who believes in Him will not be seeking to diminish the contents of His faith.

Ver. 4. **Now to him that worketh.** Vers. 4 and 5 illustrate ver. 3 by a general contrast of the two ways in which we can be accounted righteous. A workman whose business it is to labor for hire represents the legal method, the plan of making one's own moral character and doing the basis of acceptance with God.—**The reward**; his reward, for which he works.—**Not reckoned**; this takes up the verb from ver. 3, but without emphasizing it.—**As of grace, but as of debt**; not according to as a matter of favor, but of debt. That Abraham's case was 'of grace' is so plainly implied, that it was not necessary to express it, especially as the thought is now quite general.

Ver. 5. **But to him that worketh not.**—To one who does not work for hire. The statement is general, including Abraham, but not specifically applied to him.—**Believeth on him.** The idea of trust-

- 6 faith is reckoned for righteousness. Even as David also pronounceth blessing upon the man, unto whom  
 7 God reckoneth righteousness apart from works, *saying*,  
 Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven,  
 And whose sins are covered.  
 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin.

fully resting as is suggested by the original.—**That justifieth.** Here any other idea than that of accounting righteous is forbidden by the connection.—**The ungodly**; the ungodly individual, the original is in the singular. The word is chosen to present a strong contrast of ‘justifying,’ one who is alienated from God is yet accounted righteous by God.—**His faith**, etc. Meyer, while insisting that the merit of Christ always remains the meritorious cause, to which we are indebted for the imputation of our faith, objects to the usual view that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, on the ground that thus the subjective apprehension of Christ is confounded with the apprehended Christ, the objective ground of imputation. But the next verse speaks of God’s reckoning righteousness to a man, and the profound discussion at the close of chap. 5 points more directly to the imputation of Christ’s righteousness. Comp. the Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 60.

Ver. 6. **Even as David also.** The confirmatory illustration now introduced is from Ps. 32: 1, 2, here attributed to David. There is significance in the fact that David himself was a sinner who had been greatly forgiven.—**Pronounceth blessing**, lit., speaks the congratulation, the pronouncing blessed. The quotation is of forgiveness, of *not* being reckoned a sinner; but the Apostle takes this as equivalent to *the Lord reckoneth righteousness*. ‘It is implied by Paul, that the remission of sin is equivalent to the imputation of righteousness, that there is no negative state of innocence, none intermediate between acceptance for righteousness, and rejection for sin’ (Alford).—**Apart from works.** Since the forgiveness of sins is here indicated as a part of the reckoning of righteousness, this reckoning must be apart from meritorious works, for forgiveness and merit are opposed ideas.

Ver. 7. **Blessed are they**, etc. The quotation is made exactly from the LXX.—**Whose sins are covered.** The idea of the first clause is repeated under another figure, according to the parallelism of Hebrew poetry. Their sins are hid by God Himself, which is the same as ‘forgiven,’ ‘not reckoned.’

Ver. 8. **Will not reckon sin.** The negation is very strong, ‘will in no wise reckon.’ This may refer to the final judgment, but more probably points to the method of entire forgiveness (future to David’s eye) revealed in the gospel.



9 Is this blessing then pronounced upon the circum-  
 cision, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say,  
 To Abraham his faith was reckoned for righteous-  
 10 ness. How then was it reckoned? when he was in  
 circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circum-  
 11 cision, but in uncircumcision: and he received the  
 sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness  
 of the faith which he had while he was in uncir-  
 cumcision: that he might be the father of all them  
 that believe, though they be in uncircumcision, that

Ver. 9. **Is this blessing then**, etc. 'This pronouncing blessed, then, *is it* upon,' etc. The reference is to David's words. The inference, in the form of a question, is, that this declaration of blessedness affects **the uncircumcision also**, for an affirmative answer to this clause is implied in the form of the original.—**For we say**, (*i. e.*, in accordance with the quotation in ver. 3). This begins the proof from the case of Abraham, by restating the Scriptural fact. The further facts and conclusions follow. 'That' is properly omitted in the R. V.—**To Abraham**, etc. The emphasis rests on 'Abraham,' as the emended order indicates.—**His faith**, lit., 'the faith,' the faith just spoken of in ver. 3.

Ver. 10. **How then was it reckoned?** Not, what was the mode in which it was reckoned, but, 'how was he situated when this took place?' The rest of the verse makes this clear.—**Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.** The 'reckoning' took place (Gen. 15: 6) at least fourteen years before the circumcision of Abraham (Gen. 17: 25); consequently the latter was the Divine ratification of grace already received, not the effective cause or condition of the bestowal of grace.

Ver. 11. **And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal**, etc. The 'sign' was 'circumcision,' which is described as 'a seal,' etc. Meyer explains: a sign which was given him in the fact that he was circumcised, he received as seal, etc. In Gen. 17: 11, circumcision is represented as 'a token (sign) of the covenant' God made with Abraham. The covenant antedated the sign (Gen. 15). In the Talmud also, circumcision is spoken of as a sign and seal of the covenant.—**The righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision.** This is historically correct, and doctrinally accurate. Abraham's faith was in God who had promised him an inheritance, and his faith was then reckoned to him for righteousness, this being a part of the story of the covenant; when afterwards circumcision was instituted it sealed the promise or covenant, and not less the righteousness reckoned to Abraham, which came from his faith. The true idea of a sacrament is here suggested: it is a sign, seal, and means of grace, but not the grace itself. Circumcision is not the covenant; nor is baptism regeneration. The sign and seal is

12 righteousness might be reckoned unto them; and the father of circumcision to them who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had in 13 uncircumcision. For not <sup>1</sup> through the law was the

<sup>1</sup> Or, *through law.*

not itself the ground of confidence, but it testifies and openly ratifies a Divine covenant or blessing. If Abraham needed a seal of the righteousness reckoned to him, some such outward sign and seal may be expected in the Christian church.—**That he might be the father,** etc. This was the end of his receiving a sign of previous faith. The idea of spiritual fatherhood here set forth is quite Biblical, but the fullest exposition of spiritual sonship of Abraham is found in Gal. 3. ‘They that are of faith, these are sons of Abraham.’ ‘Not Jews and proselytes as such, but the believers as such—all uncircumcised who believe, and (ver. 12) the believing circumcised’ (Meyer). The former came into view first, because this was the main position to be proved, and the more striking inference from the historical facts.—**Though they be in uncircumcision;** a correct paraphrase of the original expression, which is literally ‘through uncircumcision.’—**That righteousness might be reckoned unto them.** The best authorities omit ‘also;’ which would suggest, ‘unto them as well as Abraham,’ but is quite unnecessary. This clause presents the purpose with respect to the individuals who believe though uncircumcised. It is parenthetical, for ver. 12 is parallel with the preceding clause.

Ver. 12. **And the father.** ‘Father’ is repeated to take up the line of thought slightly interrupted by the final clause of ver. 11. The full idea is: that he might be the father, etc. — **Of circumcision.** Not of the circumcision as such, but of such as are afterwards further defined.—**Not only are of the circumcision, but who,** etc. The Greek is peculiar, but the sense is easily perceived. Abraham is, indeed, the father of circumcision, but with reference to those Jews who are not merely circumcised, but also *believe*, as he did. The connection of the last idea with the historical facts respecting Abraham’s faith and subsequent circumcision is emphasized in the phrase: **walk in the steps of that faith,** etc. The sum of the argument is: ‘For Abraham’s righteousness through faith was attained, when as yet there was no distinction between circumcised and uncircumcised; and to this mode of becoming just before God, independently of external conditions, Christianity by its “righteousness by faith” leads back again and continues it’ (Meyer).—**Which he had in uncircumcision.** The form of the original closely resembles ver. 11; but the order is slightly changed. The emphasis there rests upon ‘in uncircumcision’; here on ‘faith.’

Ver. 13. **For not through the law.** This order is required by

promise to Abraham or to his seed, that he should be heir of the world, but through the righteousness of  
 14 faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of none

the emphasis indicated in the original. 'Through law' is the literal rendering, but this verse (comp. ver. 15) overthrows the view that 'law' without the article does not mean specifically *the* Mosaic law. The argument is: The Mosaic law was in no sense the ground or cause of the promise, for the law was not then in existence; and this fact is the ground of the position of Abraham as father of all believers, whether Gentiles or Jews (vers. 11, 12). Weiss attempts to extend the sense of the word 'law' throughout this passage, but only to weaken the force of the historical argument. That Paul had in mind the chronological sequence appears clearly from the fuller argument in Gal. 3. The phrase 'through the law' must not be narrowed to 'through the works of the law;' the agency of the Mosaic law is absolutely denied.—**Was the promise.** The purport of the promise is afterwards given.—**To Abraham or to his seed.** 'Or' after a negative *binds* two words closely. The promise is to both as one. Here 'his seed' is not directly referred to Christ, as in Gal. 3: 16, but to all believers, as the spiritual descendants of Abraham. In Galatians, the emphasis rests upon the fact that believers form a collective unity in Christ.—**That he should be heir of the world.** This is Paul's summing up of various promises made to Abraham for himself and his seed (Gen. 12: 7; 13: 14, 15; 15: 18; 17: 8; 22: 17). The Rabbins understood these as meaning the ultimate, universal sovereignty of the Messiah. As to the main point Paul accepts this view, though the religious significance to him was different from the Jewish conception. The same idea underlies the gospel phrase, 'kingdom of heaven, kingdom of God.' The promise will be literally fulfilled when the kingdoms of the world are given to the people of the Most High, and Christ returns to rule. Dan. 7: 27; Matt. 5: 5; Rev. 11: 15, etc.—**Through the righteousness of faith.** Gen. 15: 6, quoted in ver. 3, follows the first promise; but this need not occasion difficulty, for the promises covered a long period, and Abraham's faith began at the first promise. Comp. Gen. 12: 1-3 with Heb. 11: 8.

Ver. 14. **For if,** etc. The proof of ver. 13 is now given (vers. 14-17), from the nature of the law, and the consequent necessity of faith as the ground of inheritance.—**They which are of the law.** Comp. the contrasted idea, chap. 3: 26; Gal. 3: 7. Those who belong to the law are of that party whose religious life springs from the law, and who are legalists in character.—**Faith is made void,** is made empty and continues so, there is no use of it.—**Of none effect.** The promise is made permanently invalid. Why so? The reason is given in ver. 15.

15 effect: for the law worketh wrath; but where there is  
 16 no law, neither is there transgression. For this cause  
*it is* of faith, that it *may be* according to grace; to the  
 end that the promise may be sure to all the seed; not  
 to that only which is of the law, but to that also which  
 is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

Ver. 15. **For.** The statement that faith and the promise would be ignored, if the inheritance were through the law, must be true, *for* this reason.—**The law.** the Mosaic law, as in the entire discussion.—**Worketh wrath.** The wrath of God is meant, else the next clause would have little pertinence; moreover, ‘wrath,’ in the New Testament, in the vast majority of cases refers to God’s wrath against sin. The law does, indeed, stir up the wrath of man against God, as is set forth in chap. 7: 5, etc., but the train of thought in that chapter is distinct from that found here. Because the law brings about wrath, it cannot be the ground of promise (ver. 13).—**But where there is no law, neither is there transgression.** ‘For’ was substituted by the early transcribers, to bring out the connection of thought. Strictly speaking, this part of the verse is a general negative statement, implying the positive truth, that where there is a law, there is transgression of it, thus producing a more pronounced form of sin, upon which God’s wrath is visited; thus the law ‘works wrath.’ The negative form is probably due to the character of the main thought, the promise was independent of law (ver. 13). ‘Transgression,’ the infraction of known law, is one form of sin, but does not include all sin. ‘Sins *without positive* law (chap. 5: 13), are likewise, and, indeed, on account of the natural law (chap. 2: 14), objects of the divine wrath (see 1: 18; Eph. 2: 3); but sins *against* a given law are, in virtue of their thereby definite quality of *transgression*, so specifically and specially provocative of wrath in God, that Paul could relatively, even, deny the imputation of sin when the law was non-existent. See on chap. 5: 13’ (Meyer).

Ver. 16. **For this cause.** An inference from vers. 14, 15 (though some refer it to what follows).—**It is of faith.** What? Not the promise, but the inheritance, in view of the contrast in ver. 14. The full idea may be thus expressed: ‘the heirs are of faith.’—**That it may be.** The present is preferable, as indicating a continuous result which is purposed by God in making men heirs. ‘As the law, bringing the knowledge of guilt, works wrath, so the promise awakening faith, manifests God’s free grace, the end for which it was given’ (Alford).—**To the end that the promise may be** (the present is preferable here also). This is the purpose of God in making men heirs by the way of grace; His free unmerited favor thus makes the promise **sure to all the seed**, to all believers (comp. vers. 11, 13), **not to that only which is of the law**, *i. e.*, to the believing Jews, but also to the believing Gentiles, who are described

17 (as it is written, A father of many nations have I made thee) before him whom he believed, *even* God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth the things that

as **of the faith of Abraham** (vers. 10, 25), though not descended from him. That the former class includes only *believing* Jews (not all the natural seed of Abraham, as Weiss holds), appears from the fact that the Apostle is describing the 'seed' who become heirs by faith in order to manifest God's grace. That justification is by faith, not by works of the law, has already been proved, and is here presupposed. As the believing Jew was also 'of the faith of Abraham,' 'of the law,' the contrast respects their race, not their way of obtaining the promise. This is the same in both cases ('according to grace'), otherwise it would not be sure. — **Who is the father of us all.** 'Reiterated (comp. vers. 11, 12), solemn setting forth of the fatherhood of Abraham for *all* believers (*us*), which was, indeed, the pith and fundamental idea of the entire argument (since ver. 9),' Meyer.

Ver. 17. **As it is written.** Gen. 17: 5 is here quoted from the LXX. In view of the connection the parenthesis is to be retained. — **A father of many nations.** Comp. the significant change of name (Abraham = father of a multitude) for which this phrase gives a reason. — **Have I made thee.** '*Appointed or constituted.* The word denotes that the paternity spoken of was the result of a special arrangement or economy. It would not be used to denote the merely physical connection between father and son' (Shedd). Hence the promise was of a spiritual seed from many nations. The pertinence of the quotation thus becomes obvious. — **Before him whom he believed.** This is to be joined with ver. 16: who is the father of us all, not physically, but spiritually, *in the sight and estimation of God*, in whose sight Abraham believed. Others prefer to explain in the sight of God, whom Abraham believed; but this is not so grammatical. — **Who quickeneth the dead, etc.** Paul thus describes God, because of the peculiar circumstances of Abraham. His omnipotence is set forth in the first phrase, which is suggested by the condition of Abraham and Sarah, mentioned in ver. 19. — **Calleth the things that are not as though they were.** 'Things that are not,' relatively non-existent, as the original suggests, non-existent until God calls them into being. These things God treats as existent. The main question is, whether this means that God creates such things, or that in His decrees of Providence He disposes respecting them, just as He does respecting things already in existence. The word 'call' is most frequently used in the former sense, but the time here used points to continuous action, which accords better with the latter view. Probably both senses are implied. The phrase thus suggests the numerous seed of Abraham in regard to which God had decreed and spoken (Gen. 15: 5) while they were non-existent, except in His purpose. Some find here an undercurrent of reference to the calling of the Gentiles, or to the imputing of righteousness without righteousness; but this is far-fetched.

18 are not as though they were. Who in hope believed against hope, to the end that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had been 19 spoken, So shall thy seed be. And without being weakened in faith he considered his own body <sup>1</sup>now as good as dead (he being about a hundred years old), 20 and the deadness of Sarah's womb: yea, looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief,

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities omit *now*.

Ver. 18. **Who.** Abraham; 'who' in ver. 17 (referring to God) has no equivalent in the Greek, which does not present the ambiguity of our version. Vers. 18-22, which might constitute a separate paragraph, give a more detailed description of the faith of Abraham; grammatically this verse is parallel with 'who is the father of us all' (ver. 16).—**In hope believed against hope.** Abraham's belief rested 'upon hope' (the literal sense), but it was also contrary to hope, *i. e.*, contrary to external hope, to what might naturally be hoped for. A similar antithesis is continued throughout.—**To the end that he might become father,** etc. This was the end of the faith of Abraham in God's purpose. It is not merely the result, nor is it the purpose of Abraham, nor what he believed.—**According to,** etc. This qualifies 'become,' not 'believed.'—**Had been spoken** (Gen. 15: 5), before the promise that he should become a father of many nations (Gen. 17: 5).—**So, i. e.**, as the stars of heaven for multitude.

Ver. 19. **And without being weakened.** This clause points to a result which might have been expected, but did not occur.—**In faith:** the article in the original points to 'his faith.'—**He considered his own body.** The best manuscripts omit 'not' in connection with 'considered,' thus giving to the whole passage a different turn. Although he took all these adverse circumstances into the account, yet he wavered not. His faith might have been weakened by the long delay, or by the consideration of the physiological circumstances which made it seem impossible that he should have an heir. This negative expression in regard to Abraham's faith prepares for a description of how strong his faith was. 'Not' was probably inserted, because the passage as it stood seemed to cast a reflection upon Abraham.—**Now as good as dead,** as regards the hope of a son, in consequence of his age, **he being about a hundred years old:** ninety-nine in exact numbers, Gen. 17: 1, etc.—**Deadness;** comp. Gen. 18: 2. These passages plainly show that Abraham 'considered' this state of things.

Ver. 20. **Yea, looking unto,** or, 'yet with regard to,' **the promise of God.** The omission of 'not' in ver. 19 makes this verse present a contrast to the facts there stated, which Abraham considered.—**He wavered not through unbelief,** or, 'in unbelief.'

but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God, 21 and being fully assured that, what he had promised, 22 he was able also to perform. Wherefore also it was 23 reckoned unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was reckoned

there is no preposition in the original, and either phrase is allowable both here and in the corresponding phrase of the next clause. The form is the same as in ver. 19 ('in faith'). The article which occurs in the original, points to 'the unbelief' which might have been expected from the facts which Abraham 'considered.'—The instrumental sense.—**Waxed strong through** (or, 'in') **faith**. The article occurs here also in the original, as in ver. 19.—**Giving glory to God**. While he gave, or since he gave. This clause is to be closely joined with the next verse, which shows how he gave glory to God. Not words of praise alone, but every action that tends to God's glory, may be included in the phrase, according to Scriptural usage. Here the recognition of God's omnipotence is meant.

Ver. 21. **And being fully assured**, etc. This simple confidence in God's promise gave glory to God, and is the essence of faith (comp. Gen. 18: 14, and Heb. 11: 1). 'Many find it hardor to believe that God can love them, notwithstanding their sinfulness, than the hundred-years-old patriarch did to believe that he should be the father of many nations. Confidence in God's word, a full persuasion that He can do what seems to us impossible, is as necessary in the one case as in the other. The sinner honors God, in trusting His grace, as much as Abraham did in trusting His power' (Hodge).

Ver. 22. **Wherefore also**, etc. The whole discussion is here summed up, the last clause of ver. 3 being repeated. The immediate connection is with vers. 18-21; because Abraham had believed God in the way there described.

Ver. 23. **Now it was not written for his sake alone**. The rest of the chapter states in plain language the application of the case of Abraham to the gospel believers. Thus Paul shows that God is the God of *all* believers, and that we establish the law through faith (chap. 3: 28-31). The phrase 'it is written,' which occurs here, is not the usual one: it denotes the past historical act of writing, and emphasizes the *design* of God's Spirit in causing it to be written; the usual phrase points to the permanent validity of the Scriptural quotation. Here, as throughout the Epistle, the Apostle insists that the whole Old Testament pointed to the *universality* of Christianity. 'He thus touches one of the strongest internal proofs of the Divine origin of the revelations recorded in the Bible, namely, the one spirit which, amid a great variety of outward form, breathes throughout the whole' (Beet).

Ver. 24. **But for our sake also**. The design was not merely to show how Abraham was justified, but also to show how we should be justified.—**It shall be reckoned**. 'Shall be' is not the simple

24 unto him; but for our sake also, unto whom it shall  
 be reckoned, who believe on him that raised Jesus  
 25 our Lord from the dead, who was delivered up for  
 our trespasses, and was raised for our justification.

future, but points the purpose of God with respect to what is continuous; the justification of each believer is a single act, but that of believers as a whole is continuous.—**Who believe**; ‘since we are such as believe’ fairly presents the sense.—**Him that raised Jesus our Lord**, etc. This reference to the resurrection of Christ emphasizes the power of God, just as ver. 17 has done. The birth of Isaac was a proof of God’s omnipotence, but Christ’s resurrection is a still higher proof, both of this omnipotence, and, at the same time, of Divine grace, on which the whole argument turns (ver. 16). When the fact of Christ’s resurrection is denied or ignored by nominal Christians, their faith is weak in every respect.

Ver. 25. **Who was delivered up.** ‘A standing designation for the divine surrender of Christ, surrender unto death (chap. 8: 32), perhaps after Is. 53: 12. It is at the same time *self-surrender* (Gal. 2: 20; Eph. 5: 2), since Christ was obedient to His Father’ (Meyer).—**For our trespasses**, *i. e.*, our sins which were atoned for by His sacrificial death. ‘For,’ that is, ‘on account of,’ but not in exactly the same sense in both clauses, in this one it gives the cause, namely, a past fact: because we had sinned; in the next clause it points to a future result. Christ died to remove our guilt which already existed, but He rose again to accomplish our justification which could not otherwise take place.—**Raised for our justification.** This clause presents the positive aspect of the *same* exhibition of grace. The word ‘justification’ points to the act, though the state (of being justified) which results may be implied. By His death our Lord atoned for sin (chap. 3: 25), and secured our pardon and peace; this is the meritorious ground of our justification (comp. chaps. 3: 24, 25; 5: 9; 2 Cor. 5: 9; Eph. 1: 7; 1 John 1: 7). But unless Christ had risen, the atoning work could not have been appropriated by men, and their justification actually taken place. Without the resurrection, Christ’s grave would be the grave of all our hopes (1 Cor. 15: 17). That great fact testified that God accepted the atoning sacrifice. If man had not sinned, Christ would not have died; if Christ had sinned, He would not have been raised. To this may be added, as matters vitally connected with the words of this verse (though not fully expressed), that only the risen Saviour could intercede for us, could send the Holy Spirit to apply redemption to us; that as the death and resurrection of Christ are inseparably connected as the ground of our salvation, so the effects are indivisible, though distinguishable. The sinner cannot be buried with Christ, without rising with Him as a new creature; the death with Christ is inseparable from the new life in Christ. Hence some commentators regard this verse as a brief introduction of



## CHAPTER 5: 1-11.

*The Blessed Inward Condition of the Justified.*

1 Being therefore justified <sup>1</sup> by faith, <sup>2</sup> let us have\* peace

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *out of*.

<sup>2</sup> Some authorities read *we have*.

\* Read *We have*, and in the marg. Many ancient authorities read *let us have*.—*Am. Com.*

'the great subject of chaps. 5-8, *Death*, as connected with *Sin*, and *Life*, as connected with *Righteousness*' (Alford). See beginning of next section.

## CHAPTERS 5-8.

## III. THE GOSPEL THE POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION.

In this *third division* of the doctrinal part of the Epistle, the Apostle presents the gospel as 'the power of God unto salvation,' setting forth how God's power becomes efficient in men, as the *result* of gratuitous justification. Death is shown to be connected with Sin, and Life with Righteousness.

Chap. 5 treats of the immediate result of justification, peace with God (5: 1, 11) enforced by the parallel and contrast between the relations to the first and second Adam (5: 12-21). Chaps. 6-8 treat of the moral results of justification; namely, sanctification. As, however, the Apostle has shown the need of justification by faith from the guilt of all, so he shows the need of sanctification by the gospel method, by presenting the failure of the law to sanctify (chaps. 6, 7), before passing to the positive statements of chap. 8. (There is therefore good ground for the view which regards chaps. 3: 21-5 as treating of *justification* and chaps. 6-8 of *sanctification*.) At the same time the course of thought is not that of a formal treatise; the Apostle, writing a letter to Christians, follows to a great extent, the order of Christian experience, taking up difficulties as they are presented in the Christian life. The apparent exception to this is in chap. 5: 12-21, where we find a parallel and contrast between Adam and Christ. But even this is not an exception, for thus the connection between sin and death, and righteousness and life is set forth in its most extended form, while thus grace is shown to abound, and the gratuitous nature of justification enforced for the comfort of the believer. Moreover this apparent digression is but a more pronounced example of what occurs in well-nigh every section of the Epistle. Chap. 6 takes up an objection, which constantly recurs: will not this abounding grace allow men to continue in sin? Paul answers, that Christians have a fellowship of life with Christ, are dead to sin and dedicated to God. Moreover, they are thus freed from the law (chap. 7: 1-6). This thought suggests another objection (as constantly recurring as the previous one); will not freedom from the law lead to continued sin? The Apostle, in reply, defends the spirituality of the law (chap. 7: 7-12), but shows that it is not the power of God unto salvation (chap. 7: 13-25). In the experience he portrays, the prominent distinction is between *law* and *grace*, not sin and grace. This part of the Epistle, so far from being adapted for Jewish readers only, or for that age alone, is the part which touches our experience most closely. The antithesis between *law* and *grace* is one constantly felt; the Christian is in constant danger from legalism; and few have

learned to sympathize with the joyous utterances of chap. 8 without having proved in their own case that the law as a means of sanctification leads to wretchedness (chap. 7: 24), quite as truly as it fails to justify. Chap. 8 presents the work of the Spirit over against the failure of the law, showing the happy condition of the justified man, in the freedom of the new life, the consciousness of adoption and the assurance of future glory.

1. *The Blessed Inward Condition of the Justified, vers. 1-11.*

Justification has as its proper result peace with God (ver. 1), which becomes hope of the glory of God (ver. 2), is actually increased by tribulation (vers. 3, 4), because of God's love (ver. 5). This love is assured by the vicarious death of Christ (vers. 6, 8): and this is a proof and pledge that reconciled sinners will be 'saved in His life' (vers. 9, 10), and may glory in God who through Christ provides their reconciliation (ver. 11).

Ver. 1. **Being therefore justified.** The connection is with chap. 4: 25, but through this with the whole argument in the second division (chaps. 3: 21; 4: 25). The single act of justification is indicated in the original. The sense 'make righteous,' is altogether inappropriate here, destroying the whole force of the Apostle's inference—**Let us have** (Eng. Com.), or, **we have** (Am. Com.). The two senses are represented in Greek by two forms of the same verb, which differ only in a single letter (long or short *o*). The weight of authorities is decidedly in favor of the form which must be translated, 'let us have.' But there are considerations which weigh in favor of the other reading: (1.) The early transcribers frequently interchanged long and short *o*; (2.) The form 'let us have,' if once occurring, would be retained, because the doctrine of justification was early obscured, and this form is not so confident as the other; (3.) the exhortation seems inappropriate here. These reasons are so strong, that many who would not, in other cases hesitate to give way to manuscript authority, here retain the reading: 'we have.' So the Am. Com., with the other reading in the margin. 'Let us have peace' is to be explained, let us have it in full measure, let us appropriate what God has provided for us; comp. Heb. 12: 28. The sense of vers. 2 and 3 is affected by this reading.—**Peace with God.** Not, 'toward God.' We are, as a result of justification, no longer under condemnation (chap. 8: 1): God is at peace with us. Our feeling towards Him may and ought to correspond; but it is subject to change. God's relation to us is the great matter; on that is based true peace of conscience. (Nor is this the less true, if Paul wrote 'let us have peace,' for this exhortation, in the connection, could only mean: let us accept and possess what God has provided for us.) When God has accepted the believing sinner as righteous, He looks at him as in Christ, who is our Peace (Eph. 2: 14-16). The hindrance to peace has been removed by the death of Christ; God's wrath against our sin is removed. Peace that does not rest upon this great fact is a dream and a delusion.—**Through our Lord Jesus Christ.** This full form gives a tone of triumph to the

2 with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; through whom also we have had our access<sup>1</sup> by faith into this grace wherein we stand; and<sup>2</sup> let us\*<sup>3</sup> rejoice in hope of<sup>3</sup> the glory of God. And not only so, but<sup>4</sup> let us\* also<sup>3</sup> rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *by faith*.      <sup>2</sup> Or, *we rejoice*.      <sup>3</sup> Gr. *glory*.

<sup>4</sup> Or, *we also rejoice*.

\* Instead of *let us*, read *we* (comp. ver. 1) omitting marg. <sup>2</sup> and <sup>4</sup>.—*Am. Com.*

verse. This personal Lord has made peace, satisfied justice, removed the curse, made it possible for a holy God to be righteous in accounting righteous those who, by nature and character, are sinners. God is love, He first loved the world, but loved it *in this way*, that He gave His only begotten Son (John 3: 16); through this Son of His love we have peace with God.

Ver. 2. **Through whom.** The Personal Redeemer is kept in the foreground.—**We have had**; have obtained as our own.—**Our** (lit., 'the') **access**. (Some prefer to render the term 'introduction.')

This access is the result of justification and the ground of peace. We have peace, because at the time of our justification we obtained as our possession this access into this grace.—**By faith**. Some important manuscripts omit this, but the probabilities favor its genuineness. Paul constantly presents the Personal Redeemer, but is ever reminding his readers that by faith we appropriate what He has done for us.—**Into this grace**, *i. e.*, the state of justification, which is pre-eminently a position of 'grace,' **wherein we stand**, have our permanent position, as accepted of God.—**Let us rejoice**, or, **we rejoice**. The form here (and in ver. 3) may be either imperative or indicative; but as the sentence corresponds with the beginning of ver. 1, we must translate in accordance with the reading there. (The A. V. gives the impression that 'stand and rejoice' are closely connected.) The word itself means to glory, boast, triumph, rejoice, exult. The first is the usual rendering, but is infelicitous here, where 'glory' (another word in the Greek) immediately follows. (So ver. 3 in A. V.)—**In hope of the glory of God**. The ground of rejoicing is the hope of sharing in that glory which belongs to God; comp. John 7: 22; 1 Thess. 2: 12; 1 John 3: 2; Rev. 21: 11. That God will give this glory is implied, rather than expressed. The Roman Catholic doctrine of the uncertainty of salvation is opposed to this triumphant assurance of faith. We may, however, distinguish between assurance of a *present* state of grace, which is implied in true *faith*, personally apprehending Christ as a Saviour, and assurance of *future* redemption, which is an article of 'hope,' to be accompanied by constant watchfulness.

Ver. 3. **And not only so**; not only do we rejoice (or, let us) rejoice in the hope of glory; **but let us** (or, **we**) **also rejoice in our tribulations**. The construction is the same as in ver. 2. 'In'

4 worketh patience ; and patience, probation ; and probation, hope : and hope putteth not to shame ; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the <sup>1</sup>Holy Ghost which was given unto us.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Holy Spirit* : and so throughout this book.

is not the same word as that used in ver. 2 ; there the 'hope' was the direct ground of the glorying, here the 'tribulations' are the indirect ground, since they become the means of sanctification. 'Our tribulations,' lit., 'the tribulations,' which Christians then knew so well. Lord Bacon says: 'Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, adversity of the New.' 'Christians do not glory in suffering, as such, or for its own sake ; but as the Bible teaches ; 1. Because they consider it an honor to suffer for Christ. 2. Because they rejoice in being the occasion of manifesting His power in their support and deliverance ; and, 3. Because suffering is made the means of their own sanctification and preparation for usefulness here, and for heaven hereafter. The last of these reasons is that to which the Apostle refers in the context' (Hodge).—**Knowing that**, since we know that ; the believer finds this out in his own experience. This knowledge extends to the whole series of successive results ; the climax is set forth in ver. 5.—**Worketh patience**. Not 'patience' as we generally understand it, but 'constancy,' patient endurance, steadfastness, holding out bravely against trials and persecutions.

Ver. 4. **Probation**. 'Experience' is too wide, since it may include the whole Christian life. The term here used refers to the state of one who has successfully stood a test. In itself it might refer to the act of testing (2 Cor. 8: 2), but here the result is evidently meant. The rendering of the R. V. is not very happy, but no English word exactly answers to the Greek term.—**Hope**. As in ver. 2, 'hope of the glory of God.' But while this hope precedes the 'approval,' in an increased measure it is the further result of the approval. 'The more the Christian has become *tried*, the more also will hope continually possess him' (Meyer). Like faith and love, and every other Christian grace, hope is never done in this world, but always growing. Every enlargement of Christian life enlarges this also.

Ver. 5. **Putteth not to shame**. It will not disappoint or mock us ; it even now gives triumphant certainty.—**Because God's love**. 'The love of God,' while more literal, is ambiguous ; the Apostle means the love God has toward us. We are assured that hope shall not put us to shame, not by anything in ourselves, but because of the love of God. This love has been outwardly manifested and inwardly given to us : **hath been shed abroad** (*i. e.*, 'poured out') **in our hearts**. 'The love of God did not descend upon us as dew in drops, but as a stream which spreads itself through the whole soul, filling it with a consciousness of His love and favor' (Philippi).—**Through the Holy Ghost which was given unto us**. The outward

6 For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ  
7 died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous  
man will one die: for peradventure for <sup>1</sup>the good

<sup>1</sup> Or, *that which is good.*

manifestation of God's love is through Christ (ver. 8), but the inward (and abundant) experience of it as ours comes only through the Holy Ghost. 'Was given' points to a single bestowal; not, however, to the outpouring on the day of Pentecost, since this could not apply to Paul himself, but to the gift of the Spirit at the time of the regeneration of each Christian.

Ver. 6. **For.** This introduces the outward proof, or manifestation, of the love of God, the same love which hath been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Ghost (ver. 5). But the internal experience would be a delusion, were it not based on this historical fact, in which God's love was specially displayed. — **While we were yet weak,** *i. e.*, spiritually weak, without the Holy Spirit, through which we must receive spiritual life. 'The sinfulness is purposely described as *weakness* (need of help), in order to characterize it as the motive for the *love of God* interfering to save' (Meyer). 'Yet' is repeated in the original, according to the best manuscripts, and thus receives an emphasis which we can scarcely reproduce in English. — **In due season.** At the proper season, which was also the appointed time. Christ appeared when all the preparations for His coming were complete, and when the disease of sin had reached its crisis. It was, therefore, the 'due season,' and in Paul's mind the death of Christ was the central point of all human history (comp. Gal. 4: 4). — **Died for the ungodly.** The term 'ungodly' is chosen rather than 'us,' which would have been otherwise correct, to bring out more forcibly the strength of God's love. 'For,' in itself, means 'in behalf of;' but 'where the question is concerning a dying for those who are worthy of death, the conception naturally involves a well-understood "instead of;" see Matt. 20: 28' (Lange). The doctrine of the substitutionary death of Christ (His vicarious atonement) rests, not on the preposition, but on the context, on the whole sweep of Bible thought, and, as far as Paul's view is concerned, on such passages as chap. 3: 25; Eph. 5: 2; 1 Tim. 2: 6.

Ver. 7. **For.** This death of Christ for the ungodly shows the greatness of God's love (comp. ver. 8), since among men it is true that **scarcely for a righteous man,** still less for the 'ungodly,' **will one die.** — **For peradventure;** not, 'yet.' The Apostle adds another confirmatory clause, which admits the possibility of some one dying **for the good man.** The exact sense is open to discussion. Explanations: (1.) that there is no distinction between 'righteous' and 'good,' so far as the Apostle's argument is concerned, the second clause bringing out the thought of the first in another form, more with reference to the possibility of such rare cases. (2.) That 'the

8 man\* some one would even dare to die. But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while 9 we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more

\* Omit marg. <sup>1</sup>.—*Am. Com.*

good man' means one who is a benefactor, or who has a noble, admirable, kind character, not merely a just one. This is the usual view, though the presence of the article is variously explained. 'A righteous man,' fulfilling all just demands, calls forth respect and admiration; but 'the good man,' himself prompted by love, evokes our love, and for him **some one would even dare to die.** (3.) The marginal rendering of the Eng. Com.: 'that which is good,' is very flat, and quite unlikely in a discussion where persons are so constantly in mind. Hence the Am. Com. reject it.

Ver. 8. **But God commendeth**, or, 'doth establish' (comp. chap. 3: 5). Probably both meanings are included; the proof is of such a character as to render the love conspicuous, and thus to 'commend' it. The word has an emphatic position in the original. The present tense is used, because the atoning death of Christ is the fact which remains the most striking manifestation of the love of God.—**His own love**; possibly in contrast with the love of men, but certainly suggesting that it was God's love (of benevolence) which led to the Atonement.—**Toward us.** To be joined with 'love,' and referring, as does the whole section, to Christians.—**In that.** This may mean 'because' (Weiss), but the common rendering is preferable.—**While we were yet sinners.** So in character, and so before God, who had not yet justified us.—**Christ died for us.** (Comp. ver. 6.) His death was the ground of our justification; God's love provided this ground, while we were yet sinners.

Ver. 9. **Much more therefore.** The inference from God's love as displayed in the death of Christ (vers. 6-8), is the assurance of full salvation. An argument from the greater to the less. 'If Christ died for His enemies, He will surely save His friends' (Hodge).—**Being now justified.** A single act is referred to, but its result remains: 'now,' in contrast with 'while we were yet sinners' (ver. 8).—**By his blood,** lit., 'in.' A concrete expression for the atoning death of Christ, which is the meritorious cause of our justification (comp. chap. 3: 25).—**Saved through him from the wrath of God.** The R. V. properly supplies 'of God' (in Italics). The full final escape from wrath, at the last judgment, is suggested, but this is only a negative expression for 'the hope of the glory of God' (ver. 2); there being no middle position between objects of wrath and heirs of glory. The Apostle thus joins the certainty of salvation with the fact of God's wrath against sin and the certainty of its execution upon unbelieving sinners. As respects the word wrath, 'it denotes a personal emotion, and not merely an abstract attribute. A divine emotion is a divine attribute in energy. In relation to it, the

then, being now justified <sup>1</sup> by his blood, shall we be  
 10 saved from the wrath of God through him. For if,  
 while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God  
 through the death of his Son, much more, being re-

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *in*.

oblation of Christ is called a "propitiation" (1 John 2: 2; 4: 10). The feeling of anger towards sin is not incompatible with the feeling of compassionate benevolence (ver. 7) towards the sinner. The very Being who is displeased, is the very same Being who, through a placatory atonement of His own providing, saves from the displeasure' (Shedd).

Ver. 10. **For.** A further setting forth of the thought of ver. 9.—**While we were enemies;** *i. e.*, being, as we were, the objects of God's holy wrath. That this was while we, on our part, were opposed to God is certainly true; but the best commentators agree in declaring that the other sense is the logical one. The only objection to it rests on a mechanical and false view of Scripture language. It is supposed to imply a wrong state of feeling on the part of God. But this is impossible. When the Scriptures say that God has wrath against sinners (which really means that they are 'enemies' in the sense we advocate), they do not assert that He has the revengeful, passionate feelings which naturally belong to human enmity. Every assertion, even in our ordinary use of language, is modified by the character of the person spoken of; much more in this case, for God must be right, if there is any distinction between right and wrong. Nor does this view contradict the love of God: His love shines out conspicuously, becomes effective by means of the plan which removes His enmity without detriment to His holiness.—**We were reconciled to God,** etc. In accordance with the last remark, we refer this to God's act by means of which we cease to be the objects of His holy wrath. (Comp. ver. 11, where 'reconciliation' has been substituted for 'atonement,' and where this 'reconciliation' is said to be 'received'). The primary sense, therefore, points to the great change which has taken place in the relation of God to us, by means of the voluntary atoning sacrifice of Christ ('through the death of His Son'). Thus God's wrath was removed, His justice satisfied, and, in consequence, men are reunited to Him as a loving and reconciled Father. While it is true that man is reconciled to God 'through the death of His Son,' this is not the thought from which the Apostle is arguing, nor is it justified by correct laws of interpretation. 'All attempts to make this, the secondary meaning of the word, to be the primary, rest not on an unprejudiced exegesis, but on a foregone determination to get rid of the reality of God's anger against sin' (Trench). On the other hand, it is clear that the two sides are practically inseparable; and this *because* our reconciliation to God, as a moral process on our side is prompted and encouraged by the assurance that God has been recon-

11 conciled, shall we be saved <sup>1</sup> by his life; and not only so, <sup>2</sup> but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *in*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *but also glorying*.

ciled to us, resting on the demonstration of His love to us in the atoning death of Christ, which was the meritorious ground of His reconciliation to us. Our privilege will seem all the greater, our duty the more imperative, from holding fast to the plain meaning of the passage.—**Much more, being reconciled**, once for all. The former clause ('while we were') pointed to a past state; this indicates a past act. Paul is speaking of Christians, who have been justified (ver. 1), who have embraced this plan of reconciliation, to whom God is actually reconciled. On this accomplished fact he bases his argument: **We shall be saved by** (or, 'in') **his life**. Fellowship with the life of the ascended and reigning Lord is here suggested. 'The death of Christ effected our reconciliation; all the less can His exalted life leave our deliverance unfinished. The living Christ cannot leave without final success what His death effected. This, however, is accomplished not merely through His *intercession* (chap. 8: 34), but also through His whole working in His kingly office for believers up to the completion of His work and kingdom: 1 Cor. 15: 22' (Meyer). 'This same Saviour that died for them still lives, and ever lives, to sanctify, protect, and save them' (Hodge).

Ver. 11. **And not only so**. Not only have we been reconciled. Some explain; not only shall we be saved; but this is not so grammatical, since the correct reading in the next clause ('glorying,' R. V., marg.) makes this parallel with 'reconciled.' This verse then introduces the side of human feeling. The reconciliation is God's act, it gives assurance of complete salvation in the living Christ; but this produces present joy, triumph, glory (comp. vers. 2, 3.)—**We also rejoice in God**. The verb is the same as in vers. 2, 3, rendered in three different ways in the A. V. (The correct reading requires us to connect this verse more closely with the preceding. See the punctuation of the R. V.) Our glory is this: 'that God is ours, and we are His, and that we have in all confidence all blessings in common from Him and with Him' (Luther).—**Through our Lord Jesus Christ**. No glorying that we have as Christians comes to us other than through Him. He reconciles God to us, but He also reconciles us to God; for it is through Him **we have now received the reconciliation**. In itself 'the reconciliation' primarily means a new relation of God to us, not a moral change in us. The article points to the well-known reconciliation, spoken of in ver. 10. But here the Apostle directly refers to the believing act of reception and appropriation. 'Our' is open to the objection that it suggests too exclusively a reconciliation on our part, which exclusive reference



## CHAPTER 5: 12-21.

*Parallel and Contrast between Connection with Adam and Union with Christ; Righteousness and Life over against Sin and Death.*

12 Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed

is forbidden by the word 'received.' When we were justified by faith, we received this reconciliation, it became ours, through our Lord Jesus Christ who procured it for us, and who by being our personal Saviour makes us glory in God. Thus is completed the circle of thought begun in vers. 1, 2.—The word 'atonement,' found here in the English version, has led to much useless discussion. Within the last half century voluminous controversies have been carried on, which failed to recognize the mistranslation, or, recognizing, it ignored it in the interest of dogmatic prejudices. The reader must bear in mind the following facts: (1.) That the word corresponds with that rendered (twice) 'reconciled' in ver. 10; hence 'reconciliation' is in any case preferable. (2.) 'Atonement' in its *old* sense (= at-one-ment) meant 'reconciliation,' but does *not* now mean this. (3.) It is now a technical term applied to the death of Christ, as an expiation, propitiation, satisfaction (see chap. 3: 25). All arguments as to the nature of the atonement which fail to recognize these linguistic facts, imply ignorance or dishonesty.

2. *Parallel and Contrast between the Results of Connection with Adam and Union with Christ: Righteousness and Life over against Sin and Death, vers. 12-21.*

This profound section is, in its immediate connection, an illustration of what precedes, namely, the blessed condition of those who receive reconciliation (who are justified, vers. 1, 11) as a free gift. As if the Apostle would say, this gratuitous justification through Christ closely resembles, though with points of difference, our connection as sinners with Adam: especially in this, that the one represents the many; sin and death are bound together in the one head, Adam; righteousness and life in the other head, Christ. Like a skilful physician, the Apostle here goes to the root of the matter, not only in speaking of the disease, but also of the cure. Hence the section is not an episode, although on the other hand it is not the beginning of a new division of the Epistle. It is rather a forward step in the course of thought, serving as a basis for an advance from the doctrine of gratuitous justification to that of vital union with Christ, on which rest our sanctification and glorification. It is a confirmation of this view of the passage that some able commentators begin a new division of the Epistle here, while others take it as the close of that part which treats of justification; comp. the divisions of Lange and Godet. The beginning, middle, and end of history are here brought together in their representative moral powers and principles. Only a mind of the highest order—to say nothing of inspiration—could conceive such vast thoughts, and express them in so few words.

This part of the Epistle has been a battle ground for exegetes from the days of Augustine; every line bears the marks of theological controversy. Without anticipating, we may remark that here Paul evidently views the human race as an organic unit. Adam and Christ, he conceives, sustain to it a central and universal relation. The former was not merely an individual, but the head of the race, and his transgression affected the whole race. The latter, the second Adam, the Son of man, is the representative head of renewed humanity, who has gained for His people more than Adam lost. God, in infinite wisdom and mercy, has overruled the wrath of man for His own glory. These are the two leading thoughts of the section: as respects sin and death, righteousness and life, the act of the one (Adam, Christ) affects the position and character of the many. The main point is not 'imputation,' which is, however, as we hold, plainly suggested; but rather the *oneness* of the person, laying the meritorious ground, respectively, for the states of sin and death, and of righteousness and life. But the parallel is not complete: the triumph of grace exceeds the ruin of sin. (The 'much more' is not numerical, nor merely logical, but *dynamic*.) We may analyze the section thus:—

The connection of sin and death asserted in the case of Adam, the parallel suggested, but not expressed; ver. 12. Historical confirmation of the fact respecting the result of Adam's transgression, closing with a reference to 'the coming One,' which supplies the omitted parallel; vers. 13, 14. Three points of difference stated, before the parallel is resumed; vers. 15-17. (The punctuation of the A. V. making a parenthesis from vers. 13-17, joins vers. 12 and 18 too closely, and detracts from the force of the intervening verses.) Resumption and restatement of parallel; vers. 18, 19. Purpose of the law to show the abounding of grace (indicated in vers. 15-17); vers. 20, 21.

As regards the translation of the section, there is unusual agreement among scholars, but no part of the A. V. calls for more frequent minor emendations to present the exact sense of the original. The inaccuracies in rendering the Greek prepositions and the article are especially numerous.

Ver. 12. **Therefore.** First of all on account of the statement of ver. 11, but virtually on account of all that precedes, since ver. 11 sums up the whole doctrine of righteousness and salvation. Since 'reconciliation' is received through our Lord Jesus Christ in the manner already set forth, 'therefore' the following parallel between Adam and Christ holds good.—**As,** etc. The main difficulty is in regard to what should correspond with 'as,' the construction not being regular. The view of Meyer, which is grammatically most defensible, is that indicated in the analysis at the beginning of the section. The correspondence is suggested in ver. 12, the second member ('the coming One') indicated in ver. 14; expressed, after some points of difference, in vers. 18, 19. In the rush of ideas suggested by the parallel, Paul intentionally suspends the mention of the second half, until he has proven one point in regard to the first half (vers. 13, 14), and stated three important contrasts. In full form the parallel would be: 'so also by one man, Jesus Christ, righteousness entered into the world, and life through righteousness, and thus life shall extend to all men, on condition that all believe, or are justified.' But the parallel cannot hold in the last clause; for all men are sinners, but not all are

believers; all are one with Adam, but not all are one with Christ. Other unsatisfactory explanations: that there is a designed suppression, because the parallel would not hold; that vers. 13-17 are parenthetical (so A. V.); that we should supply: 'It was,' or, 'Christ wrought,' before 'as.'—**Through one man**, *i. e.* Adam (ver. 14). Eve is not mentioned, for Adam had received the commandment, was the head of the woman, and had he not transgressed, *his* posterity would not have sinned (Bengel). The comparison between Adam and Christ is the only apt one, and there is no reference to Satan, because the Apostle is concerned with the *effect*, not the *mode*, of the fall (Meyer).—**Sin**. The presence of the definite article in the Greek, and the course of thought sustain the view that 'sin' is here regarded as a power or principle, personified as a fearful tyrant, who has acquired universal dominion over the human race. Compare the characteristics of 'sin,' as given in this Epistle: it 'reigns in death' (ver. 21); 'lords it over us' (chap. 6: 14); 'deceives and slays' the sinner (chap. 7: 11); 'works death' in us (chap. 7: 13). This view is further sustained by the distinction made, throughout this section, between 'sin,' 'transgression,' and 'offence.' The term is therefore, not to be limited, either to original sin on the one hand, or to actual sin on the other.—**Entered into the world**; the world of man. 'According to the Apostle's conviction, evil was already in existence in another world' (Tholuck), that of the angels. Hence our passage sheds no light on the origin of evil, except in the human race.—**Death**. The entrance of death into the world of humanity was through sin, death as a power in the world resulted from the entrance of sin as a power; the two are uniformly connected in the Bible, beginning with Gen. 2: 17. Some limit the reference here to physical death, which undoubtedly was the first result. But the results of 'sin' are more extensive, and the contrast with 'life' in vers. 17, 18, 21, points to the widest sense of 'death' throughout the entire passage. This includes all physical and moral evil, the entire penal consequences of sin, death of the body, spiritual death, and eternal death of both soul and body ('the second death,' Rev. 2: 11; 20: 6, 14; 21: 8). The fact that physical death did not immediately follow the first transgression, shows that Gen. 2: 17 included a more extensive penalty.—**Passed**, *lit.*, 'came through,' **unto all men**. The universal reign of death is thus connected, chronologically and logically, with its cause, the universal reign of sin. 'All men' represents the several individuals making up 'the world.'—**For that**, or, 'because,' 'on the ground that.' This is the view now generally accepted. Other views: 'In whom, *i. e.*, Adam; an ancient view (so Augustine), now generally rejected as ungrammatical. 'On the condition that;' but this is unusual, and designed to meet a doctrinal difficulty.—**All sinned**, not, 'have sinned.' A single historical act is meant, namely, the past event of Adam's fall, which was at the same time virtually the fall of the human race as represented by him and germinally contained in him. (For the views of this connection

13 unto all men, for that all sinned:—for until the law  
 sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when  
 14 there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from  
 Adam until Moses, even over them that had not  
 sinned after the likeness of Adam's transgression, who

between Adam and his posterity, see Excursus at the close of the section.) As regards the interpretation of the words, it may be insisted that 'sinned' is not equivalent to 'became sinful.' There remain two views: (1.) As a historical fact, when Adam sinned all sinned, because of the vital connection between him and his posterity. (2.) When Adam sinned, all were declared sinners, he being the representative of the race. The objection to this is, that 'sinned' is not equivalent to 'were regarded as sinners.' It makes the parallel between Adam and Christ more close than the passage thus far appears to warrant.

Ver. 13. **For until the law.** Vers. 13, 14, present a historical confirmation of the statement that 'all sinned.' All sinned when Adam sinned, *for* the penalty of sin came from the very first, and that, too, when there was no such transgression of positive precept as in the case of Adam. Hence the penalty was the result of Adam's sin, an idea familiar to all who believed the Old Testament.—**Sin was in the world.** Sin as a tyrant, with its penal consequences. This thought is resumed and expounded in ver. 14.—**But sin is not imputed;** 'fully reckoned' is perhaps the best reading of the compound verb in the original. In a certain sense it is reckoned (comp. chap. 2: 9-16), but it cannot be fully reckoned as 'transgression,' **when there is no law**, or, in the absence of law. This proposition would be self-evident to the readers, and it was emphatically true of the Mosaic law, which, as ver. 14 shows, was in the Apostle's mind.

Ver. 14. **Nevertheless.** Although sin is not fully reckoned where the law is absent.—**Death reigned.** 'Lorded it.' The consequence of sin ('death through sin,' ver. 12) was universal, even before the law: **from Adam until Moses.** The word 'until' represents here a different word from that used in ver. 13, but there is no appreciable difference in sense.—**Even over them that, etc.** Death, which here includes more than physical death, as the penalty of sin, lorded it over even such as **had not sinned**, etc., *i. e.*, were not guilty of a definite **transgression**, the transgression of a definite command of God. The Apostle's argument is that death came upon these as a consequence of the sin of Adam, and thus he proved that 'death passed unto all men, because all sinned' in that transgression. The class 'that did not sin,' etc., is not further described. Infants are doubtless included, though not specially referred to. In the period between Adam and Moses divine commands were given; those who transgressed them were punished accordingly, but even those, whoever they were, who had not received positive command came under the consequence of this sin, thus proving that Adam's sin was

15 is a figure of him that was to come. But not as the trespass, so also is the free gift. For if by the tres-

the cause. — **Who is a figure of him that was to come**, 'the coming One,' *i. e.*, the second Adam, 'Jesus Christ' (ver. 15). Here we have suggested the second member of the parallel begun in ver. 12. The first Adam, the one man through whom sin and death entered into the world, is the 'figure,' lit., 'type,' of the one man Jesus Christ. The word 'type' is derived from the verb meaning to *strike*, and hence signifies first, a blow, an impression, then form, figure, pattern, model; at length we find the technical sense, a person or thing bearing a designed resemblance to some higher person or thing, foreshadowing or symbolizing an 'antitype.' Christ is here spoken of as 'the coming One,' as historically related to the first Adam. Comp. 1 Cor. 15: 45, where Paul directly contrasts the first and second Adam.

Vers. 15-17. The parallel has been suggested, but the points of difference are brought out before the correspondence is fully stated (vers. 18, 19). The symmetry of the clause will appear from the following arrangement of the passage:—

15	{	But not as the trespass, so also is the free gift. For if by the trespass of the one the many died; much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many.
16	{	And not as through one that sinned so is the gift: for the judgment came of one (man or trespass) unto condemnation, but the free gift came of many trespasses unto justification (an act of righteousness).
17	{	For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one; much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, <i>even</i> Jesus Christ.

The question arises whether 'much more' expresses a stronger degree of *evidence* or a higher degree of efficacy. In vers. 16 and 17 the former is certainly preferable, and probably in ver. 15 also. It is not that more are saved than are lost, this cannot be; nor yet that what is gained is more than what is lost, though this is true enough; but the character of God, from a Christian point of view, is such that the comparison gives a 'much more' certain basis for belief in what is gained through the second Adam than in the certainties of sin and death through the first Adam.

pass of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God, and the gift by the grace of the one  
 16 man, Jesus Christ, abound unto the many. And not as through one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgement *came* of one unto condemnation, but the

Ver. 15. **But not as the trespass.** The word here used refers to an act of sin, and is almost the same as 'transgression' (ver. 14), and 'disobedience' (ver. 19). Perhaps this suggests, more than the other terms, the idea of weakness, hence 'fall' expresses one phase of the meaning. But it is usually rendered 'trespass.' All these words are less inclusive than 'sin' (vers. 12, 13). 'But' marks a strong contrast.—**So also is the free gift,** or, 'gift of grace,' 'the atoning and justifying act of divine grace in Jesus Christ' (Meyer). Four different words are used in this passage to express the same thought of free grace, and it is difficult to distinguish them in English.—**For** introduces the proof of the difference just stated.—**If,** as is certainly the case, **by** (not, 'through,' as the A. V. incorrectly renders) **the trespass of the one.** The article must, of course, be restored in English, to bring out the sense: 'the one,' 'the many.' In this case Adam is 'the one,' and the consequence to all of the immense multitude of his posterity is tersely expressed: **the many died.** 'The many,' over against 'the one'; not 'many' (as in the A. V.), implying a contrast with 'few'; here it is equivalent to 'all'; comp. vers. 12, 18.—**Much more.** Not simply that the gift was more abundant, but with much more certainty it is to be expected from God, or has God proved, that grace abounds.—**The grace of God.** This is the source of the **gift,** namely, the gift of justification.—**By** (lit., 'in') **the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ.** This may be joined either with 'gift,' or with the verb; the latter is preferable.—**Abound unto the many.** 'The many' in Christ. Meyer, who refers it to all mankind, as in the previous clause, says: 'To this multitude has the grace of God been plentifully imparted, namely; from the objective point of view, in so far as Christ's act of redemption has acquired for all the divine grace and gift, although the subjective reception of it is conditioned by faith.'

Ver. 16. **And not as through one that sinned.** There is some (but insufficient) authority for another reading: 'through one sin.' A single act of sin is referred to in either case.—**So is the gift.** It is only necessary to supply 'is;' though some suggest fuller explanations. 'Gift' is a different word from that in ver. 15, but refers to the same thing.—**For the judgement.** The judicial sentence of God. The word itself may refer to a favorable or unfavorable sentence.—**Came.** This, or some verb of motion, is to be supplied; the prepositions involving the idea of motion, or result.—**Of,** or, 'from,' **one.** (Not, 'by.') This may refer to one *trespass*, in accordance with the next clause, or to one *man*, namely, 'one that sinned,' in the previous clause.

free gift *came* of many trespasses unto <sup>1</sup>justification.  
 17 For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned  
 through the one; much more shall they that receive  
 the abundance of grace and <sup>2</sup>of the gift of righteous-  
 ness reign in life through the one, *even Jesus Christ*.  
 18 So then as through one trespass *the judgement came*

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *an act of righteousness*.

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *of the gift*.

The latter is preferable; what precedes usually determines the sense of an elliptical phrase.—**Unto condemnation.** The judicial sentence ('judgement'), in consequence of the act of one man, resulted in 'condemnation;' as set forth in ver. 12.—**But the free gift,** or, 'gift of grace' (as in ver. 15).—**Of, or, 'from,' many trespasses.** The many sins of men could be pardoned only by a 'free gift.' In this sense they were the origin or occasion of the free gift. As a result this free gift **came unto justification.** This is not the word usually rendered 'justification.' But the meaning is substantially the same. The word, derived from the verb meaning 'to account righteous,' here denotes either, in opposition to 'condemnation,' the righteous decree or verdict which God pronounces on account of the perfect obedience of Christ, or, in opposition to 'trespass' (as in ver. 18), the righteous act of Christ on which that verdict is based. It seems improper to refer it to the subjective state of justification. See further on ver. 18.

Ver. 17. **For if.** A confirmation of ver. 16, yet an advance of thought.—**By the trespass of the one.** A briefer reading: 'in one trespass,' is found in good authorities, but the longer reading is now clearly established.—**Death reigned through the one, i. e., Adam.** The repetition is probably to prepare for the triumphant close of the verse, contrasting the two persons. The correspondence between the clauses is in other respects not exact.—**Much more.** Here certainly not numerical: if this was God's way of justice, with *much more* certainty will His way of grace be, as is now described.—**They that receive the abundance of the grace.** The change of form brings into the foreground the persons who are the subjects of grace. With 'the trespass of the one' is contrasted the abundance of the grace as bestowed on, and accepted, by living persons.—**The gift of righteousness.** 'Righteousness' is 'the gift,' righteousness imputed.—**Reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ.** 'In life' is to be taken in its fullest sense; this is the sphere in which those who receive the abundance of the grace shall reign. The whole clause has a triumphant tone, pointing from present grace to future glory, all mediated 'through the one, Jesus Christ.' This is the emphatic side of the contrast. If, as a fact, sin and death were through Adam, then much more certain is it that abundant present grace and triumphant future glory shall be through our one head, Jesus Christ.

Ver. 18. **So then** (not, 'therefore'). With this phrase, which

unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness *the free gift came* unto all men to  
19 justification of life. For as through the one man's

means 'in consequence of all this, it follows that,' Paul resumes the parallel, summing up all the previously stated points of resemblance and difference; the design being to show how the inheritance and imputation of sin confirms, renders more certain, the imputation of righteousness and the abounding reign of grace.—**Through one trespass.** The A. V. is incorrect, since the acts, not the persons, are here contrasted.—**The judgement came.** The R. V. supplies the article here, leaving the correct paraphrase of the A. V. otherwise unaltered.—**Unto all men to condemnation.** Here 'all men' without exception.—**Even so, or, so also;** the latter is slightly preferable.—**Through one act of righteousness;** the same word rendered 'justification' in ver. 16. Here Christ's obedience, viewed as one act, as the ground of justification, seems to be meant, yet a reference to the justifying verdict gives a good sense.—**Came,** not, 'shall come,' since the Apostle is speaking of the objective side.—**All men to justification of life.** 'All men' may be taken in a *universal*, but not in a *Universalist*, sense. The 'righteous act' which forms the meritorious ground of God's justifying act is sufficient for all men without exception; and the Apostle speaks of it in this light. But the subjective application of it implies the receiving of it (ver. 17) by faith. See further on ver. 19, which contrasts the actual results as respects 'the many' on the one side, and 'the many' on the other. 'Justification' is here the proper rendering. 'Of life,' *i. e.*, leading to life, in the fullest sense; the interpretation 'justification which is life' confuses the Apostle's thought.

Ver. 19. **For.** This word shows that we have here the explanation of ver. 18, and thus of the whole passage. The sense is: As in consequence of the disobedience of the one man (Adam) the many (including all his posterity) were constituted sinners (put in the category of sinners, subject to condemnation), so also in consequence of the obedience of the one (Christ) shall the many (as many as believe in Him, ver. 17) be constituted righteous (be placed in that category). The contrasts are exact, except that 'the many,' comes in as a middle term of quantity, that 'man' is omitted in the second clause, where moreover the future is substituted for the past, showing that the actual efficacy of the gospel is here spoken of, and not the objective sufficiency, as in ver. 18.—**Were made sinners—were made righteous.** The main point open to discussion, is respecting the exact sense of the word rendered 'were made.' Three views: (1) set down, placed as such, in a declarative sense; (2) placed in the category, because of a vital connection; (3) becoming so ethically, not declaratively. The last seems contrary to the whole course of thought. The first gives a grammatical sense, but is often held in a way that



disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous. And <sup>1</sup>the law came in beside, that the trespass might abound; but where sin abounded,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *law*.

carries the parallel beyond Paul's statements. The second is sustained by the best of modern commentators, though with considerable difference in regard to the mode, and the extent of the parallel. Meyer's position is: Through the disobedience of the one man, because all had a part in it, has the position of all become that of sinners, consequently they were subjected to punishment; on the other hand, God has forgiven believers on account of the death of Christ, and counted their faith as righteousness; thus the obedience of the one has caused that at the judgment the many shall by God's sentence enter into the category of the righteous. Actual sin and inwrought righteousness are results, on either side, but these results are not here under discussion. 'Obedience' is chosen, in contrast with 'disobedience,' with a reference, either to Christ's death as the culminating act of His obedience, or to His whole life of obedience culminating in that act. It must be noticed, that the emphasis in this verse and throughout is placed by Paul upon the positive and gracious side of the parallel: righteousness and life to the many through the One Jesus Christ, while interpreters too often dwell well-nigh exclusively upon the other side. The inference of a *universal salvation* cannot properly be drawn from vers. 15, 18. Paul teaches the *universal sufficiency* of the gospel's salvation, but we must, in view of the language elsewhere and of the facts which meet us everywhere, make the important distinction between this and the subjective *efficacy* of Christ's atonement. All men *may* be saved, hence we invite all; how many and which individuals *will* be saved, is known only to God. Dr. Hodge says: 'We have reason to believe that the lost shall bear to the saved no greater proportion than the inmates of a prison do to the mass of a community.' Yet many adults die in Christian lands and surrounded by gospel privileges, without giving any evidence of their faith in Christ, and of a second state of probation we have no proof whatever.

Ver. 20. **And the law.** The Mosaic law is meant, although the article is wanting in the original. 'What of the law then?' was the question the Jew, and, indeed, any early Christian would ask. 'But' is therefore preferable to 'and.'—**Came in beside.** The same phrase is used in a bad sense, Gal. 2: 4, but here it indicates coming in addition to, not coming in between, though the latter is true.—**That the trespass might abound.** This was the immediate, but not the final purpose (see ver. 21). The Apostle says 'trespass,' not, 'sin,' because the design of the law was not to multiply sin as such, but to make it appear, to reveal it to the conscience, as a

21 grace did abound more exceedingly : that as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

transgression of the law of God. Yet the presence of the law does provoke to sin, and this thought is not to be ruled out in this passage.—**But where sin abounded.** In the very sphere, in the world of men where ‘sin’ existed as a tyrant.—**Grace did abound more exceedingly ; ‘over-abounded.’** The verb is a compound one, differing in form entirely from that previously used ; the force of ‘over’ is superlative, not comparative. This clause is explained in ver. 21.

Ver. 21. **That as sin reigned in death.** The ultimate purpose of the exceeding abounding of grace is set forth in this verse, especially in the last clause. The first clause simply takes up the other side of the parallel. In ver. 14 death is represented as the tyrant ; here ‘sin’ is presented under the same figure, ‘death’ being the sphere of its dominion or tyranny, and referring to all the penal consequences of sin. Some would render ‘by death,’ but this is objectionable.—**Even so** (comp. ver. 18) **might grace reign.** This is the purpose. ‘The design of God in permitting sin, and allowing it to abound, was to bring good out of evil ; to make it the occasion of the most wonderful display of his glory and grace, so that the benefits of redemption should infinitely transcend the evil of the apostacy’ (Hodge).—**Through righteousness.** This refers to imputed righteousness, in conformity with the entire course of thought. Righteousness of life might be included, but cannot be the main idea.—**Unto eternal life.** ‘Life’ in contrast with ‘death,’ and ‘eternal’ in contrast with temporal. Physical death is not abolished, but grace reigns through righteousness with eternal life as the result.—**Through Jesus Christ our Lord.** This full form is solemnly triumphant. Adam is lost sight of ; the personal redeemer, the king, is the One through whom Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.—‘*Sin, death, grace, righteousness, life.* These five stand thus : Grace rises highest in the middle ; the two conquering giants, sin and death, at the left ; the double prize of victory, righteousness and life, at the right ; and over the buried name of Adam the glory of the name of Jesus blooms’ (Besser).

#### DIFFERENT THEORIES OF ORIGINAL SIN AND IMPUTATION.

##### *Excursus on Rom. 5: 12–21.*

(Comp. Lange, *Romans*, pp 191–5 ; where will be found the fuller statements of Dr. Schaff, here presented in an abridged form.)

The universal dominion of sin and death over the human race is a fact, clearly taught by the Apostle here, and daily confirmed by our religious experience. This dominion extends in an unbroken line to our first parents, as the transgression of Adam stands in a causal relation to the guilt and sin of his posterity. The Apostle assumes this connection, in order to illustrate the blessed truth, that the power and

principle of righteousness and life go back to Jesus Christ, the second Adam. However explained, the existence of sin remains a stubborn, terrible reality. Least of all can it be explained by the denial of the parallel, yet contrasted, saving facts which are prominent in the Apostle's mind throughout this section. The leading points which he asserts, and which therefore must enter into any consistent theory respecting his view of original sin, are: (1.) That the sin of Adam was the sin of all his posterity (see ver. 12); in what sense this is true, must be determined by the passage as a whole. (2.) That there is parallel and contrast between the connection of Adam and his posterity, and Christ and His people (see vers. 14-19). (3.) That this parallel applies to the point which has been so fully discussed in the previous part of the Epistle, namely, that believers are *reckoned* righteous (see vers. 12-18). (4.) That the connection with the two representative heads of the race has moral results; that guilt and sin, righteousness and life, are inseparably connected (see vers. 17-19).

The various theories may be reviewed in the light of these positions:—

I. The PANTHEISTIC and NECESSITARIAN theory, which regards sin as an essential attribute (a limitation) of the finite, destroys the radical antagonism between good and evil, and has nothing in common with Paul's views of sin or grace.

II. The PELAGIAN heresy resolves the fall of Adam into a comparatively trivial, childish act of disobedience, which sets a bad example. It holds that every child is born as innocent and perfect, though as fallible, as Adam when created. This view explains nothing, and virtually denies all the assertions made in this section. Its affinities, logically and historically, are with Socinianism and the multifarious forms of Rationalism. It, and every other theory which denies the connection with Adam, fails to meet the great question respecting the salvation of those dying in infancy. Such theories logically exclude them from the heaven of the redeemed, either by denying their need of salvation, or by rejecting the only principle in accordance with which such salvation, if they need it, is possible, namely, that of imputation.

III. The theory of a PRE-ADAMIC fall of all men, which implies the pre-existence of souls, as held by Plato and Origen, is a pure speculation, and inconsistent with ver. 12 as well as with Gen. 3. It is incidentally opposed in chap. 9: 12.

IV. THE AUGUSTINIAN or REALISTIC theory holds that the connection between Adam and his posterity was such, that by his individual transgression he vitiated human nature, and transmitted it in this corrupt and guilty state to his descendants by physical generation, so that there was an impersonal and unconscious participation of the whole human race in the fall of Adam. There is this difference, however: Adam's individual transgression resulted in a sinful nature; while, in the case of his descendants, the sinful nature or depraved will results in individual transgression. This view accords in the main with the grammatical exegesis of ver. 11, but Augustine himself incorrectly explained 'for that,' as 'in whom' i. e., Adam. It accepts, but does not explain, the relation between genus and species. Like all other matters pertaining to life, it confronts us with a mystery.

In the application of this theory to the positions (3) and (4) named above, different views have arisen, mainly in regard to *imputation*, whether it is *immediate* (or antecedent), *mediate* (or consequent), or both conjoined and inseparable. That is, whether the imputation of the guilt of Adam's sin preceded or followed the guilt of man's inherent and hereditary depravity. (*Guilt* is here used in the technical sense of 'liability to punishment,' not in the ethical sense of *sinfulness*.) This distinction was

not made by Augustine and the Reformers. But examining their views in the light of subsequent discussions, we may say that *both* kinds of imputation were recognized by them; some laying stress upon one side, some on the other, but not to the exclusion of either. It was only in later times that the two were sharply defined, *in order to* divide them.

2. *Mediate* (or consequent) imputation makes inherent depravity derived from Adam, and this alone, the ground of condemnation. This view, however, as a matter of history, passes rapidly into a denial of any imputation.

3. *Immediate* (or antecedent) imputation, as opposed to *mediate* imputation, makes the sin of Adam, as the sin of the federal head of the race, the exclusive ground of condemnation, independently of, and prior to, native depravity and personal transgressions. Hereditary guilt precedes hereditary sin. From this view the transition was easy to the next theory.

V. The FEDERAL theory of a vicarious representation of mankind by Adam, in virtue of a covenant (*fædus*, hence 'federal') made with him. It supposes a (one-sided) covenant, called the covenant of works (in distinction from the covenant of grace), to the effect that Adam should stand a moral probation on behalf of all his descendants, so that his act of obedience or disobedience, with all its consequences, should be accounted theirs, just as the righteousness of the second Adam is reckoned as that of His people. This transaction, because *unilateral* (one-sided), finds its ultimate ground in the sovereign pleasure of God. It is a part of the theological system developed in Holland, and largely incorporated in the standards of the Westminster Assembly. Yet here, too, a distinction has been made.

I. The founders and chief advocates of the federal scheme combined with it the Augustinian view of an unconscious and impersonal participation of the whole human race in the fall of Adam, and thus made imputation to rest on ethical as well as legal grounds. This view, which differs very slightly from IV., seems to accord best with the four leading points of this section, since it recognizes Adam as both federal and natural head of the race.

2. The *purely federal* school holds that by virtue of the federal headship of Adam, on the ground of a sovereign arrangement, his sin and guilt are justly, directly, and immediately imputed to his posterity. It makes the parallel between Adam and Christ exact, in the matter of the imputation of sin and of righteousness. 'In virtue of the union between him and his descendants, his sin is the judicial ground of the condemnation of the race, precisely as the righteousness of Christ is the judicial ground of the justification of His people.' This view does not deny that Adam is the natural head of the race, but asserts that 'over and beyond this natural relation which exists between a man and his posterity, there was a special divine constitution by which he was appointed the head and representative of his whole race' (Hodge, *Theology*, ii., pp. 195, 197).

VI. In sharp antagonism to the last view, most of the recent New England theologians have virtually rejected imputation altogether. They 'maintain that the sinfulness of the descendants of Adam results with *infallible certainty* (though not with necessity) from his transgression; the one class holding to hereditary depravity prior to sinful choice, the other class teaching that the first moral choice of all is universally sinful, yet with the power of contrary choice.' In this view a nice distinction is made between natural ability and moral inability. When consistently held, it denies that 'all sinned' (ver. 12) refers to the sin of Adam, taking it as equivalent to the perfect, 'all have sinned,' namely, personally with the first responsible act.

VII. The SEMI-PELAGIAN and kindred ARMINIAN theories, though differing from each other, agree in admitting the Adamic unity, and the disastrous effects of Adam's transgression, but regard hereditary corruption as an evil or misfortune, not properly as sin and guilt, of itself exposing us to punishment. Arminianism, however, on this point, inclines toward Augustinianism more than Semi-Pelagianism does. The latter fails to give full force to the language of the Apostle in this section, and to sympathize with his profound sense of the guilt and sinfulness of sin. The advocates of neither theory present explicit and uniform statements on this doctrinal point.

Those views which seem to keep most closely to the grammatical sense of the Apostle's words involves mysteries of physiology, psychology, ethics, and theology. Outside the revelation there confronts us the undeniable, stubborn, terrible fact, of the universal dominion of sin and death over the entire race, infants as well as adults. No system of philosophy explains this; outside the Christian redemption, the mystery is entirely one of darkness, unilluminated by the greatest mystery of love. Hence the wisdom of following as closely as possible the words which reveal the cure, as we attempt to penetrate the gloom that envelops the origin of the disease. The more so when the obvious purpose of the Apostle here is to bring into proper prominence the Person and Work of the Second Adam. Here alone can we find any practical solution of the problem respecting the first head of the race; only herein do we perceive the triumphant vindication of Divine justice and mercy. The best help to unity in the doctrine of Original Sin will be by larger experiences of the 'much more' which is our portion in Christ Jesus. Only when we are assured of righteousness and life in Him, can we fearlessly face the fact of sin and death in Adam.

## CHAPTERS 6-8.

### 3. *Moral Results of Justification; those Justified by Faith Live a New Life in the Spirit.*

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation; through it the will is affected, and thus is accomplished *morally* what the law could not do, namely, the sanctification of those born sinners. But just here the greatest objection is raised to the doctrine of free salvation; and with this objection the Apostle begins his discussion:—

I. The gospel method of grace does not lead to sin but to holiness; chap. 6.

(1.) Because of what is necessarily involved in the new life (vers. 2-11); (2.) those who partake of this new life are dead to sin and dedicated to God (vers. 12-23).

II. The relation of Christians to the law: it is in itself just and good, but powerless to sanctify; chap. 7.

(1.) Believers are freed from the law (vers. 1-6), but (2.) this does not prove that the law is sin; for, as it has been proven that it cannot justify, it now appears that though holy it cannot make sinners holy (vers. 7-25).

III. The sanctifying work of the Spirit, the free life in the Spirit over against the life in the flesh; chap. 8 (see further analysis there).

## CHAPTER 6: 1-11.

*Fellowship in the Death of Christ involves a New Life.*

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin,  
2 that grace may abound? God forbid. We who died  
3 to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? Or are

## CHAPTER 6.

## I. GRACE DOES NOT LEAD TO SIN.

(1.) *Fellowship in the Death of Christ Involves a New Life*, vers. 1-11.

The objection with which the discussion opens, which has been repeatedly urged against the doctrine of justification by faith, shows conclusively what Paul meant by that doctrine, namely, that God accounts men righteous when they believe in Christ. Otherwise the objection would not have been raised, nor the subsequent discussion necessary. But this discussion shows that the Apostle used the term 'death' and 'life' in the widest sense. We do not continue in sin, he argues, that grace may abound (vers. 1, 2), for our baptism indicated fellowship with Christ, and this fellowship is dying to sin and living to God (vers. 3-11). The section is not so much an argument as an appeal to Christian experience. The error it opposes is extirpated by a vital and growing knowledge of the saving power of Christ in the gospel.

Ver. 1. **What shall we say then?** 'Then,' in view of chap. 5. 20, 21. Comp. the similar phrase in chap. 4: 1.—**Shall we continue in sin?** The form of the question in the original indicates that this is the statement of a point to be discussed, or rather of a wrong inference that might be drawn from the abounding of grace. This wrong inference is a standing objection to the gospel, urged by those who have not felt its power.

Ver. 2. **God forbid.** Comp. note on chap. 3: 4. Here, as there, an indignant denial: 'let it not be that we continue in sin.'—**We who.** 'We who are of such a kind as.'—**Died to sin.** Not, 'are dead.' When this death 'with respect to sin' took place is shown in vers. 3, 4. There is throughout an implied appeal to Christian consciousness, as witnessing the ethical change. The remission of sin, which is signified and sealed by baptism, involves a death to sin. The reference, therefore, is to the time of baptism, which, in the Apostolic church, usually coincided with conversion and justification. This is preferable to the view that the reference is to Christ's death and our fellowship in it. Observe, that the Apostle assumes the inseparable connection between justification and sanctification, and yet distinguishes them; the justified man is sanctified, not the reverse.

Ver. 3. **Or are ye ignorant.** 'If this is doubtful, then I appeal directly to your experimental knowledge.'—**All we who,** referring to the same persons as in ver. 2; all without exception.—**Were baptized into Christ Jesus.** 'Into,' in such expressions, does not

ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ  
 4 Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried  
 therefore with him through baptism into death: that  
 like as Christ was raised from the dead through the  
 glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness  
 5 of life. For if we have become <sup>1</sup>united with *him* by

<sup>1</sup> Or, *united with the likeness . . . with the likeness.*

point to the external element (although immersion was, and in the East still is, the usual mode), but has a far deeper meaning. Baptism into Christ Jesus was the sign of participation in Him, union with Him, and the Apostle asserts that they all knew that this union meant fellowship with His death, so that they were **baptized into his death**; hence with Him they die unto sin. The reference to baptism does not suggest baptismal regeneration; it both connects and distinguishes baptism and regeneration, as the visible sign and the invisible grace of the renewing Spirit. 'Let us not separate what the Lord has joined together. We ought, in baptism, to recognize a spiritual laver; we ought in it to embrace a witness to the remission of sins and a pledge of our renewal; and yet so to leave both to Christ and the Holy Spirit the honor that is theirs, as that no part of the salvation be transferred to the sign.' (Calvin.)

Ver. 4. **We were buried therefore with him through baptism.** A stronger expression than that of the last verse. That the custom of baptism by immersion is alluded to is generally admitted, but the *emersion* is as significant as the immersion. The death of the old man is at the same time the birth of the new. One form may be more striking than another, may have the earliest usage in its favor; but it seems improper to make the efficacy of the rite depend upon the quantity of water, or upon the mode of its application.—**Into his death**; for the appropriation of its full benefit, namely, the remission of sins and reconciliation with God.—**That** ('in order that') **as Christ was raised**, etc. The death and resurrection of Christ stand together; so the Christian who is in fellowship with Christ, shares in His life.—**Through the glory of the Father.** 'The glorious collective perfection of God certainly effected the raising of Jesus chiefly as omnipotence (1 Cor. 6: 14; 2 Cor. 13: 4; Eph. 1: 19, etc.); but the comprehensive significance of the word—selected with conscious solemnity, and in highest accordance with the glorious victory of the Son—is not to be curtailed on that account' (Meyer).—**In newness of life**; this is more emphatic than 'a new life': a life which never grows old, whose characteristic 'newness' is imperishable.

Ver. 5. **For if.** A confirmatory explanation of ver. 4; 'if' being almost equivalent to 'since.'—**Have become united.** 'Planted together' (A. V.) is incorrect; the figure is that of vital connection; 'with *Him*' is implied in the original. Some suggest 'grafted into;'

the likeness of his death, we shall be also *by the like-*  
 6 *ness* of his resurrection; knowing this that our old man  
 was crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be  
 done away, that so we should no longer be in bondage  
 7 to sin; for he that hath died is justified\* from sin.

\* Add marg. Or, *released*.—*Am. Com.*

but this is a different figure.—**By the likeness of his death.** The rendering 'by' accepts this phrase as instrumental, *i. e.*, we became united with Christ through the likeness of His death; with a latent reference to baptism. Others, more correctly, supply 'in' or 'into,' and explain the likeness of His death as 'the condition corresponding in similarity of form to His death, which has specifically and indissolubly become ours' (Meyer). Our vital union with Him involves death to sin (vers. 3, 4).—**We shall be** (*i. e.*, become united with Him) **also by the likeness of his resurrection.** If the previous clause means: 'united unto Christ by the likeness of His death,' then this must be explained accordingly. The whole points to the certainty of the other result of vital union with Christ; newness of life as truly as death to sin. Thus continuance in sin is doubly denied.

Ver. 6. **Knowing this**, or, 'since we know this.' 'This' refers to what follows, the whole defining the last clause of ver. 5.—**That our old man.** Our sinful nature is here personified (comp. Eph. 4: 22; Col. 3: 9); almost equivalent to 'flesh,' in the ethical sense, as used in chaps. 7, 8, and elsewhere.—**Was crucified with him.** Not necessarily at baptism, but when Christ died, in virtue of our union with Him (comp. Gal. 2: 20).—**That the body of sin.** Of this phrase there are three leading explanations: (1.) The body as the seat of sin; this is contrary to the view of the body which Paul especially presents. (2.) The body, so far as it remains under the power of the old man, 'sin' being a possessive genitive. This is less objectionable, but seems a confusing of the literal and figurative senses. (3.) Sin is conceived as an organism, with many members; the whole is but another form of the expression, 'our old man.' This is, on the whole, preferable, since even (2.) leads to ascetic inferences which are quite unapostolic.—**Should no longer be in bondage to** (or 'be the slaves of') **sin.** Another form of expressing the destruction of the organism of sin, which is represented as a master who holds us in bondage.

Ver. 7. **For he that hath died.** 'He that died' is more literal, but 'hath died' better expresses the relation to what follows.—**Is justified from sin.** This is the permanent result. The word 'justified' is to be taken here in its strictly legal sense, absolved, acquitted, freed (see marg. of *Am. Com.*) There are three views in regard to the meaning of 'hath died': (1.) *Physical* death; the whole verse being a proverb: he who has died is freed from sin. The application to spiritually dying to sin is afterwards made. Meyer modifies this



8 But if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall  
 9 also live with him ; knowing that Christ being raised  
 from the dead dieth no more ; death no more hath do-  
 10 minion over him. For <sup>1</sup>the death that he died, he  
 died unto sin <sup>2</sup>once : but <sup>1</sup>the life that he liveth, he

<sup>1</sup> Or, *in that*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *once for all*.

view : in so far as the dead person sins no more. The reference to physical death is favored by the connection ('for') with what precedes. (2.) *Moral* death. But death to sin is the result, not the ground of justification. (3.) Death with Christ (*mystical* or spiritual death) justifies the sinner, frees him from its guilt and punishment. This thought is true enough, but seems inappropriate here, where the Apostle is giving a reason for ver. 6. Besides, dying with Christ is plainly expressed in the next verse. We prefer (1), regarding the verse as a proverbial maxim. 'As natural death cuts off all communication with life, so must sanctification in the soul cut off all communication with sin' (Henry).

Ver. 8. **But if we died with Christ.** That this is the fact has been already stated, forming the underlying thought of vers. 3-6.—**We believe**, etc. The argument is plain, but the exact force of **live with him** is doubtful. It seems best to accept a primary reference to sanctification, to ethical fellowship with Christ. To this some add the thought of eternal life, others apply the phrase to this exclusively.

Ver. 9. **Knowing** ; 'since we know.' The ground of our belief is the knowledge of His enduring life, after His triumphant resurrection.—**Being raised from the dead.** The resurrection is the pledge of His enduring life.—**No more hath dominion over him.** It had dominion over Him, as God decreed (chap. 5: 8-10) and as He voluntarily gave Himself up to it, but there its power ended. The sentence stands independently. The transitoriness of the dominion of death is thus emphasized by the form of expression. (Comp. Acts 13: 34.) Unless our Saviour is now undying, we cannot be sure of living in and with Him.

Ver. 10. **For the death that he died.** Lit., 'that which he died,' which is best paraphrased as we give it.—**He died unto sin once** (Gr. 'once for all') ; no repetition was necessary. This is the proof that death has dominion over Him no more : His death was 'unto sin,' it could have nothing more to do with Him, hence death could have power over Him no more. Some refer the clause to Christ's expiating sin ; others to His expiating and removing it ; others, in view of ver. 11, explain it of His being freed from sin. 'In both cases the idea of separation is expressed ; but in the case of the believer, it is separation from personal, indwelling sin ; in that of Christ, it is separation from the burden of His people's sin, which He bore upon the cross' (Hodge). The

11 liveth unto God. Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus.

### CHAPTER 6 : 12-23.

#### *Christians are Dead to Sin, and Dedicated to God.*

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof: neither present

emphatic 'once for all' shows that this sacrifice needs no repetition; for His dying again no reason can exist.—**He liveth unto God.** Christ's life on earth was also a life 'unto God,' but in conflict with sin and death; having triumphed over these at his resurrection, He now lives unto God in the fullest sense. This, too, proves that death has dominion over Him no more.

Ver. 11. **Even so.** This is an inference and the application to the readers.—**Reckon ye.** The word may be either imperative, or indicative: the former suits the context best.—**Also;** like Christ (ver. 10).—**Dead unto sin.** The notion of reckoning that they died *for* sin, in and with Christ, seems contrary to the whole argument of the passage.—**But alive unto God in Christ Jesus.** Only in fellowship with Christ Jesus can we reckon ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God. The negative and positive sides of the new moral life are based upon fellowship with the Personal Redeemer who died and rose again. The exhortation is to an apprehension ('reckon') of this as a motive for holy living. Hence the utter impossibility of our continuing in sin that grace may abound (ver. 1). The obvious inference is that dying to sin and living to God is the evidence (and the only valid evidence) of our fellowship with Christ. On the other hand, the way is thus prepared for enforcing the thought, so essential in Paul's argument (and equally so in Christian experience), that fellowship with Christ, and not the pressure of law, is the fundamental fact in a life of holiness. Christian morality cannot exist without Christ.

#### (2.) *Christians are Dead to Sin, and Dedicated to God,* vers. 12-23.

The exhortation of ver. 11 is expanded in vers. 12-14; the negative part ('dead unto sin') in vers. 12, 13 *a*; the positive part ('alive unto God') in vers. 13 *b*, 14. But the concluding motive: 'for ye are not under the law, but under grace.' suggests another objection, namely, that this would imply freedom to sin (ver. 15). This objection the Apostle answers by carrying out in detail an illustration from service. Christians are no longer servants of sin, with the wages of death; but servants of righteousness (servants of God), thus becoming sanctified, and receiving as the gift of God 'eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (The section is preliminary to chap. 7, which shows more fully that we are 'not under the law, but under grace.')

Ver. 12. **Let not sin therefore.** 'Therefore,' *i. e.*, because you

13 your members unto sin *as*<sup>1</sup> instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members *as*<sup>1</sup> instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion

<sup>1</sup> Or, *weapons*.

reckon yourselves dead unto sin, etc. (ver. 11)—**Reign.** ‘It is no matter of comparison between *reigning* and *indwelling merely*, but between *reigning* and *being deposed*’ (Alford).—**In your mortal body.** This is to be taken literally, and not referred to a body dead to sin, or to a corrupt body. The connection with ver. 11 suggests that this ‘mortal body’ is under the power of sin; but it is the mortality of the body that is emphasized, in contrast with the life we have in fellowship with Christ who dieth no more (ver. 9); hence, to allow sin to reign there is contrary to living ‘unto God in Christ Jesus’ (ver. 11).—**That ye should obey the lusts thereof.** So the briefer and better established reading. The reign of sin in our mortal body would have as its aim obedience to the desires of the body, which are sinful, because we are sinful. Obeying these is living unto sin, hence opposed to the principle of ver. 11.

Ver 13. **Neither;** ‘and especially not.’—**Present** (so chap. 12: 1) is preferable to ‘yield,’ since the latter conveys the idea of previous resistance; the thought is of placing at the disposal of another; probably the figure of military service is suggested.—**Your members,** ‘the various parts of the body which can be used in the service of sin. If ‘mortal body’ (ver. 12) is taken figuratively, then ‘members’ must be taken accordingly.—**As instruments,** or, ‘weapons.’ The latter sense is more literal, and accords better with the Apostle’s usage, with the figure of military service.—**Of unrighteousness;** opposed to ‘righteousness,’ not simply immorality.—**Unto sin.** Personified as ruler (comp. ver. 12).—**But present yourselves to God;** the new and true ruler. The command is to present themselves entirely, once for all (the tense in the original is not the same as in the previous clause).—**As alive from the dead.** Regarding yourselves as those that are alive, almost—since you are. There seems to be no thought of a battle-field, but rather of ver. 11.—**Your members,** etc. This is a more particular statement of the previous exhortation, corresponding with the first clause of the verse.—**Unto God;** not, ‘for God,’ which disturbs the parallelism.

Ver. 14. **For sin,** etc. The future tense is that of confident assertion, and hence of consolation. It is not a new exhortation.—**For ye are not under law,** etc. This is the reason sin shall not have dominion. ‘Freedom from the law gives you so little freedom to sin, that it is only by the exercise of grace upon you that your freedom from sin has begun’ (Lange.) Here the Apostle prepares for the fuller discussion as to the powerlessness of the law to sanctify as well as to justify. If the reason sin will not lord it over us, is that we are not

over you : for ye are not under the law, but under grace.  
 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under  
 16 law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not,  
 that to whom ye present yourselves as <sup>1</sup>servants  
 unto obedience, his <sup>1</sup>servants ye are whom ye obey;  
 whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto  
 17 righteousness? But thanks be to God, <sup>2</sup>that, whereas

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bond-servants*.<sup>2</sup> Or, *that ye were . . . but ye become*.

under the law, but under grace, then grace sanctifies us, not the law.  
 (Comp. chap. 7 throughout.)

Ver. 15. **What then? shall we sin**, etc. This objection has been raised ever since. It is not precisely the same as that suggested in ver. 1: there the objection was that free pardon would encourage us to continue in sin; here the objection is that freedom from the law leads to freedom in sinning. The connection with chap. 7, as well as the entire argument in chaps. 6-8, points to sanctification by grace, and forbids an exclusive reference to the grace of justification.—**God forbid**; as usual. The denial is expanded in what follows. The legal heart makes the objection; but the loyal heart makes this indignant denial.

Ver. 16. **Know ye not**. 'I take it for granted that ye know and believe' (Stuart).—**To whom ye present yourselves**, etc. This principle is obvious: To present yourselves as servants to any one implies service to that one: in this matter the masters are opposed, hence **whether**, . . . or, there is no third.—**Of sin unto death**. Both terms are used in the usual wide sense: 'sin' is personified as the master, the result of the service is 'death,' including all the consequences of sin.—**Of obedience unto righteousness**. Here 'righteousness' refers not to justification, but to inwrought righteousness, not excluding the final verdict at the judgment. Meyer accepts the latter sense alone. The more exact parallelism would be: 'of righteousness unto life.' The deviation may be thus explained: Of our own free choice we give ourselves as bondmen to *sin*, but cannot thus give ourselves to *righteousness*: we can only yield ourselves up to God's grace, to save us, as servants of *obedience*, unto righteousness, given to us and inwrought of the Holy Ghost (so Forbes). In ver. 18, 'servants of righteousness' occurs, after 'being made free from sin.'

Ver. 17. **But thanks be to God**. In reminding them which of these masters they served (ver. 16), his heart speaks.—**That, whereas ye were the servants of sin**. 'Were' is emphatic; this state is past, and for this the Apostle is thankful, although this negative side of salvation cannot be separated from the positive.—**Ye became obedient from the heart**. The moral change at conversion made their true, internal attitude that of obedience.—**That form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered**. This rendering is

ye were <sup>1</sup>servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that <sup>2</sup>form of teaching wherunto  
 18 ye were delivered; and being made free from  
 19 sin, ye became <sup>1</sup>servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bond-servants*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *pattern*.

greatly to be preferred to that of the A. V. The change to the passive suggests the Divine agency in delivering them to this form of teaching. This phrase, literally, 'type of teaching,' is interpreted: (1) of Christian doctrine in general: which is objectionable, because in that case 'type' would be unmeaning: (2) of the Pauline teaching, over against the Judaistic forms of Christianity: (3) of the ideal, or 'pattern,' presented by the gospel, the ethical rule of life it gives. The second interpretation is the best. Obedience to this type of teaching, over against legalism, is something for which to thank God; because it is God's work, and because it is worthy of thanks. It follows that it is important to know what Paul's teaching is. The next verse is closely connected with this; a semicolon has therefore been substituted for the period of the A. V.

Ver. 18. **And being made free**, etc. This is not the conclusion from what precedes, but a continuation of ver. 17. The single act of deliverance and transformation is referred to.—**Became servants**, personally and wholly belonging to this service. This bondage is real freedom. Compare the opposite thought in ver. 20.

Ver. 19. **I speak after the manner of men**. 'I take a figure from human relations, in thus representing Christian freedom as a bond service.' (The phrase differs from that used in chap. 3: 5, but there seems to be no marked difference of thought.)—**Because of the infirmity of your flesh**. Because of the intellectual weakness resulting from the 'flesh,' which is here used in the ethical sense, of depraved human nature (see chap. 7). Others refer the phrase to moral weakness, and explain: 'I require nothing which your fleshly weakness could not do,' and then join it with what follows: 'for I only require such service as ye formerly rendered to sin.' This is open to serious objection, as lowering the moral standard presented by the Apostle.—**For as**, etc. This explains what was stated in ver. 18.—**Servants to uncleanness**, moral defilement, **and to iniquity**, violation of God's law, the two sides of 'sin' (ver. 13).—**Unto iniquity**. This may mean: in order to work iniquity, or, resulting in iniquity; the latter, pointing to a state, rather than an act, seems preferable.—**So also**, etc. The explanation changes to an exhortation, based on the facts of their experience, both before and since conversion.—**To righteousness unto sanctification**. The rendering 'holiness' (A. V.) points to the ultimate purpose or result; 'sanctification' suggests the immediate result, coming into view here as a

of your flesh: for as ye presented your members as servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now present your members as servants  
 20 to righteousness unto sanctification. For when ye were <sup>1</sup>servants of sin, ye were free in regard of right-  
 21 eousness. What fruit then had ye at that time in the things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of  
 22 those things is death. But now being made free from

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *bond-servants*.

progressive state. The same word occurs in ver. 22, and the meaning 'sanctification' seems preferable there, where a further result is spoken of.

Ver. 20. **For.** This verse 'restates the view given of their former condition in respect to sin and righteousness, in preparation for the final and most accurate statement of their present spiritual condition, ver. 22' (Webster and Wilkinson). Meyer here properly calls attention to the tragical force of emphatic order of words in the original.—**When ye were servants of sin** (comp. ver. 17), **ye were free in regard of righteousness.** The only freedom they had was this sad freedom as respects the right service; the deepest slavery in fact, just as to be servants of righteousness is the truest freedom. It was not that they counted themselves free, or that righteousness had no claims upon them, but that, as a terrible fact, they were uninfluenced by its demands.

Ver. 21. **What fruit therefore had ye at that time;** in this condition before conversion (ver. 2). Many editors and commentators punctuate the verse so as to read: 'What fruit therefore had ye then? Things whereof ye are now ashamed.' (The R. V. does not even give this view the benefit of a marginal rendering.) It is urged against this view that 'the question in antithesis to ver. 21, is the having of fruit, not its quality' (Meyer), and that the answer, which is only implied, is: ye had no fruit at all, for the end is death, not fruitfulness. Against the view presented in the A. V., Alford urges that it is 'inconsistent with the New Testament meaning of *fruit*, which is "actions," the fruit of the *man* considered as the tree, not "wages," or "reward," the fruit of his *actions*.' Either view is grammatically admissible, and both have been advocated for centuries.—**For the end of those things is death;** here in its most comprehensive meaning in contrast with close of ver. 22.

Ver. 22. **But now,** as opposed to 'at that time' (ver. 21), **being made free;** comp. ver. 18.—**Servants to God.** 'God Himself here takes the place of "righteousness," for their relation is now one of personal love' (Lange).—**Your fruit unto sanctification,** as in ver. 19; but even more appropriate here. They are having fruit now, in contrast either with their having no fruit 'then,' or with the evil

sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit  
23 unto sanctification, and the end eternal life. For the  
wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is  
eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### CHAPTER 7: 1-6.

#### *Christians are freed from the Law.*

Or are ye ignorant, brethren (for I speak to men  
that know <sup>1</sup>the law), how that the law hath dominion

Or, *law.*

fruit in their previous condition. This fruit is of such a kind as at once results in 'sanctification,' the progressive state, the ultimate issue being **eternal life**. This is to be taken in its widest sense; we already have eternal life in germ; in its fulness is the 'end' of all our fruit and fruitfulness. But this end is not attained by natural laws of development; each course of conduct has its inevitable result, but for a different reason; see next verse.

Ver. 23. **For.** The reason for the results stated in vers. 21, 22, contrasting the ends of the two courses and the inherent difference.—**The wages of sin**, that is paid by sin. Possibly a continuation of the figure of military service.—**Death**, as in ver. 21.—**But the free gift of God**: comp. chap. 5: 15-16. 'Paul does not say "wages" here also, but characterizes what God gives for wages, as what it *is* in its specific nature,—a gift of grace. . . . To the Apostle, in the connection of his system of faith and doctrine, this was very natural, even without the supposition of any special design' (Meyer).—**In Christ Jesus our Lord**. Not simply, 'through' Him. The phrase qualifies the whole clause. In phrases like this there seems to be a propriety in the order 'Christ Jesus,' emphasizing His Messianic (or mediatorial) title. 'In Him by virtue of His relation to Deity, God is the giver: in Him, we, as united with Him, having an interest in Him, are recipients' (Webster and Wilkinson).

### CHAPTER 7.

#### II. THE RELATION OF CHRISTIANS TO THE LAW.

(1.) *We are freed from it* (vers. 1-6); *for*, (2.) *Although it is Holy it cannot make Sinners Holy* (vers. 7-25).

1. *Christians are freed from the Law*, vers. 1-6.

This section might more properly form a part of the preceding chapter. The statement of chap. 6: 14, which has been discussed negatively (chap. 6: 15-23), is now taken up on its positive side: Christians are not only freed from sin, but freed from

2 over a man for so long time as he liveth? For the woman that hath a husband is bound by law to the

the law. This state of things is here illustrated under the figure of the marriage relation: 'your marriage with Christ having taken the place of the dominion of the law, necessarily leads to such a dominion of God in a new life' (Tholuck). The relation to the law (ver. 1) illustrated by the law of marriage (vers. 2, 3); the union with Christ who died to the law dissolves the old relation (ver. 4), with this result that as, in the old relation, we brought forth fruit unto death (ver. 5), in the new relation we are dedicated to God (ver. 6). This idea of freedom from the law is the basis of the discussion in the remainder of the chapter.

Ver. 1. **Or are ye ignorant.** (Comp. chap. 6 : 3.) In thus appealing to experience, it is implied that every believer, whether he can explain it or not, *feels* that he is in the state described in chap. 6 : 22, 23, and hence has some knowledge of his freedom from the law. This knowledge the Apostle would bring into clearness and power.—**Brethren**, etc. Not addressed to the Jewish Christians alone; for in that age, especially, the knowledge of the Old Testament on the part of all Christians was presupposed; the custom of reading the Old Testament probably obtained in their assemblies.—**Know the law.** The law of Moses is meant, although the article is wanting in the original; for while the argument might hold true when based upon law in general, the subject under discussion is the relation to the Mosaic law.—**The law hath dominion**, etc. The whole law is meant, not simply the law of marriage: for that has not yet come into view.—**For so long time**, etc. This is a peculiarity of the Mosaic law, 'that it cannot, like human laws, have merely temporary validity, or be altered, suspended, nor can one be exempt from it for a time' (Meyer). But comp. the death to the law (ver. 4).

Ver. 2. **For the woman that hath a husband**, etc. This is an example of the principle of ver. 1.—**Is bound by law.**—The permanent binding is indicated by the form of the original. The Mosaic law made no provision for her releasing herself from the marriage tie, though the husband might put away his wife (Deut. 24 : 1, 2).—**If the husband die**: a single event is spoken of. The language is plain, but the application has occasioned difficulty. In ver. 1 it is not the ruling law, but the man who dies; here it is the ruling man who dies. Allegorical explanations have been suggested, but seem forced. It is better to understand it thus: Death is common to both parties; when the husband dies, the wife dies so far as that legal relation is concerned. The husband is represented as the party who dies, because the figure of a second marriage is to be introduced, with its application to believers (ver. 4). 'As the woman is not dead, but is killed in respect to her marriage relation, or is situated as dead, by the natural death of her husband, so believers have not died a natural death, but are made dead to the law, since they are crucified to the



husband while he liveth; but if the husband die, she  
 3 is discharged from the law of the husband. So then  
 if, while the husband liveth, she be joined to another  
 man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if the hus-  
 band die, she is free from the law, so that she is no  
 adulteress, though she be joined to another man.  
 4 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to  
 the law through the body of Christ; that ye should  
 be joined to another, *even* to him who was raised from  
 the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God.

law with Christ. The idea, *dead in a marriage relation*, is therefore the middle term of comparison.' (Lange).

Ver. 3. **So then.** This being the case it follows. The verse forms a parallelism.—**Shall be called an adulteress.** This is the formal sentence, with a definite penalty—stoning (Lev. 21: 10; comp. John 8: 5).—**Free from the law;** free from in so far as it binds her to the husband, the binding effect of the law as respects the marriage relation.—**So that she is no adulteress.** This clause may express either the result ('so that') or the purpose, 'in order that.' The latter is perhaps grammatically more exact; the purpose of this freedom was to prevent the woman from being an adulteress in case of a second marriage. In ver. 4 the idea of result is evident enough.

Ver. 4. **Wherefore;** lit., 'so that.' This introduces the application of the figure in vers. 2, 3.—**Ye also,** as in the case of the widow, or, more generally, as in all cases of release from law (Weiss).—**Were made dead to the law.** The idea is not of being dead, but of being put to death, at some single past time, namely, at justification. 'The expression is chosen, not merely because Christ's death was a violent one, but also because it describes the death of Christians to the law as a death incurred by virtue of the administration of the law' (Lange); comp. Gal. 2: 19.—**Through the body of Christ.** This refers to the death of Christ, either (1) as the ground of justification, or (2) as involving our fellowship in His death. The latter is preferable; it implies the former, and suits the tenor of the whole passage.—**That, i. e.,** in order that, **ye should be joined to another,** one of a different kind. The purpose of the death to the law was union to Christ; the figure of a marriage is still present, and quite appropriate. 'The exalted Christ is the husband of His Church that has become independent of the law by dying with Him' (Meyer).—**Was raised from the dead.** The idea of a new ethical life is constantly joined by the Apostle to the fact of the resurrection. His own experience gave emphasis to this.—**Fruit unto God, i. e.,** for His glory, since Christ is the Husband. But it is not necessary to press the figure of marriage at this point, or in the similar expression in ver. 5.

5 For when we were in the flesh, the <sup>1</sup>sinful passions, which were through the law, wrought in our members  
6 to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we have been discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were holden; so that we serve in newness of the spirit, and not in oldness of the letter.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *passions of sins.*

Ver. 5. **For.** A confirmation of the statement that they should bring forth fruit to God.—**When we were in the flesh,** *i. e.*, in the natural condition of depravity (see Excursus at next section); still under the law is the negative side.—**The sinful passions.** The passions which led to sins, rather than either ‘sinful passions,’ or the passions produced by sins.—**Which were through the law;** occasioned by the law, since the law brought them to light, but aggravated them, as is shown in vers. 7, 8.—**Wrought in our members;** to be explained literally as in chap. 6: 13, 19.—**To bring forth fruit unto death.** Parallel to the last clause of ver. 4, hence expressing the aim as well as the consequence of the working of the passions. ‘Death’ is to be explained as in chap. 6: 21.

Ver. 6. **But now.** Comp. chap. 6: 22.—**We have been discharged,** the same word as in ver. 2. The annulling of the marriage relation is referred to in both cases. Here the exact reference is to the simple past act of release or discharge from the law, at the time of justification.—**Having died to that,** etc. This is the sense of the reading now generally accepted. The figure of marriage is retained; we died so far as the law is concerned, hence the marriage tie is dissolved (comp. ver. 2). ‘Wherein’ points to the law, which ‘held’ us bound until we died to it (comp. ver. 1). Weiss, however, refers it to ‘the flesh’ (ver. 5).—**So that we serve;** serve God, as the whole passage shows. A present result, of which the readers were aware, is expressed in the original, as the emendation of the R. V. indicates.—**In newness of the spirit,** *i. e.*, the Holy Spirit. The sphere of the Christian service of God is a new one, of which the Holy Spirit is the ruling element or force. Comp. the life in the Spirit as described in chap. 8. The former service was **in oldness of the letter.** This is not simply ‘old letter,’ nor is it exactly the same as ‘in the flesh,’ or, ‘under the law.’ The religious service, before death to the law, was ruled by the letter, by the outward form; hence it had an element of decay, it was a grievous yoke. This does not imply an antithesis between the grammatical sense of Scripture and some spiritual sense, but points to the legal state, where the attempt at obedience is prompted, not by the Holy Spirit, but by the restraint of an external, literal rule. The new service is the only true service; under the law such a service was not possible. The law said: ‘Do this and live;’ the gospel says: ‘Live and do this,’ and the doing is of a different character from all the previous attempts to earn eternal life.

## CHAPTER 7: 7-25.

*The Law is Holy, but cannot make Sinners Holy.*

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through

(2.) *The Law is Holy, but cannot make sinners Holy*, vers. 7-25.

The fact that Christians are freed from the law might suggest a wrong inference as to the character of the law. This Paul denies (ver. 7), but shows how the law, though in itself good, leads to acquaintance with sin and to destructive results (vers. 8-12). In ver. 13 he suggests another (but similar) wrong inference, and then portrays the operation of the law in man, producing conflict and captivity rather than holiness (vers. 14-23). In vers. 24, 25. the whole description is summed up in a cry of misery, followed by an outburst of gratitude for deliverance, closing with the contrast between the service of mind and flesh.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE. This section has been a theological battlefield for fifteen hundred years: the main question being, to whom does Paul refer when he says 'I,' whose history was he describing? It is generally agreed that the experience is his own, but that it is applicable to all men, in so far as they are striving to obey the law. It is also generally conceded that the first part of the description (vers. 7-13) refers to Paul (and to men in general) before regeneration. The question which remains is: To what class does the description of vers. 14-25 apply? Explanations: 1. To the *unregenerate* man, depicting the unsuccessful strivings of his better moral nature. The main difficulty with this view is that some of the expressions indicate a higher moral purpose than is found in unregenerate man. 2. To the *regenerate* man. In favor of this may be urged (a.) the change to the present tense from ver. 14 on; (b.) the common experience of Christians as respects indwelling sin. The objection is that the whole passage up to ver. 25 is silent as to the distinctively Christian character of the work of sanctification. Moreover this view would tend to ignore the obvious difference between chaps. 7 and 8. If the experience is that of a Christian, it is that of a Christian who is still dallying with law as the principle of holy living. We therefore prefer 3. The Apostle does not have in mind any sharp distinction between the unregenerate and regenerate states, but gives the experience of man attempting to become better through the law; of an awakened man, before he comes to Christ; but also of a Christian man so far as he feels the pressure of law rather than the power of the Spirit. Hence it is not always possible to discriminate; if the distinction between the regenerate and unregenerate states is emphasized. Yet the Apostle himself, as a Jew, before his conversion, probably passed through this entire experience. It was his state, not when sunk in sin, but when awakened to earnest struggles against sin under the scourge of the law, under preparation for a state of grace. Many loyal, despondent Christians never pass out of

<sup>1</sup> the law: for I had not known <sup>2</sup> coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not <sup>2</sup> covet: but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment

<sup>1</sup> Or, *lust*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *lust*.

this conflict into the more joyous life of the Spirit. They believe that they are justified by faith in Christ, and yet attempt to be sanctified by works of the law. But the section not only presents the common experience of individuals, it also sketches the religious history of the race. Vers. 7-13 correspond with the phenomena of heathenism: the natural man, at first without revealed law and then convicted by it. Vers. 14-25 present the phenomena of Judaism: man under the law, his conscience quickened thereby, but he himself still in bondage, longing for a deliverer. The closing verses prepare for chap. 8, which presents Christianity with its life of freedom in the Spirit. In the fifth century the passage was discussed by Augustine, who changed his views in regard to it after his controversy with Pelagius. Many centuries later, in Holland the exegesis of the passage was the pivotal point in the conflict between the Calvinists and Arminians. The tendency at present seems to be in favor of the position advanced under (3).

Ver. 7. **What shall we say then?** Comp. chap. 3: 5. The Apostle proposes to consider the wrong inference which arises in many minds, that because the law works as described in vers. 5, 6, it is itself wrong.—**Is the law sin?** Because, on account of it, we sin, as already described, is it of an immoral nature? This the Apostle indignantly denies, with the usual formula: **God forbid**; and then proceeds to show how the good law occasions these results in us.—**Howbeit** (or, 'nay, but') concedes that there is an apparent ground for the previous question. The law discovers sin, and in a measure incites to it, but it is not itself sin nor the cause of sin (Alford). 'I say not that, but what I mean is that.' Meyer and others explain: 'But on the contrary.'—**Known sin** points to both theoretical and experimental knowledge of sin; the latter includes the excitement to sin which every human being feels, to some extent, when confronted with a positive precept.—**Except through the law.** The article is wanting, and the principle applies in part to law in general, but the next clause shows that the Mosaic law is meant.—**For I had not known.** This confirms the previous statement; the verb is different from that which precedes, suggesting a slighter knowledge; even this is denied.—**Coveting.** This rendering preserves the correspondence with the similar verb which follows. 'Lust' (A. V.) is too specific.—**Thou shalt not covet.** From Ex. 20: 17. The objects of the coveting are omitted, for it was the evil desire itself which was made known to him by the commandment forbidding it.

Ver. 8. **But sin.** This approaches a personification of sin, as in chap. 5: 12-21. The excitement resulting from the pressure of the

all manner of <sup>1</sup> coveting: for apart from <sup>2</sup> the law sin is dead. And I was alive apart from <sup>2</sup> the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and

<sup>1</sup> Or, *lust*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *law*.

law is now described.—**Finding occasion.** This is properly separated by a comma from what follows: ‘It indicates the furnishing the material and ground of attack, the *wherewith* and *whence* to attack’ (Alford).—**Through the commandment**, namely, that mentioned in ver. 7, **wrought in me all manner of coveting** (as in ver. 7). ‘To man everytning forbidden appears as a desirable blessing; but yet, as it is forbidden, he feels that his freedom is limited, and now his lust rages more violently, like the waves against the dyke’ (Tholuck). Philippi calls this, ‘an immovably certain psychological fact, which man can more easily reason away and dispute away, than *do away*.’ The classic authors support the same principle: see the quotations given in the footnote, Lange, *Romans*, pp. 229, 230.—**For apart from the law**, or, independently of the law, **sin is dead**. Not, ‘was,’ the proposition is a general one. ‘Dead’ is here used in a relative, not an absolute, sense. Sin is relatively inoperative until excited into opposition by the law. A reference to its being unobserved, undetected, is less probable. The context shows that the Mosaic law is meant. ‘That this may be and is misused by the principle of sin, in the way indicated, arises from the fact, that it comes forward merely with the *outward command* (thou shalt, thou shalt not), without giving the power of fulfilment’ (Meyer). This is also applicable to the law written in men’s hearts, but because sin is essentially opposition to God, the revealed law of God with its sanctions arouses the greatest opposition.

Ver. 9. **And I was alive apart from the law once.** ‘For’ is incorrect; this clause continues the description of the state without the law. ‘Alive’ has been explained as meaning: (1.) I seemed to myself to live, because not knowing my sin. (2.) I lived securely as a Pharisee. (3.) I lived comparatively innocent. The first is too narrow; the second is opposed by the immediate context which does not point to conversion; the last is preferable, if not pressed too far. ‘Before an individual has a distinct and vivid perception of the nature and spirituality and extent of the Divine law, he is less active and desperate in his sin and guilt than after he comes to such a knowledge’ (Stuart).—**But when the commandment came**; when the specific precept came home to me with its prohibition and command. This does not refer to the experience immediately preceding conversion, as some of the older expositors claim.—**Sin revived**, or, ‘sprang into life.’ The former is the more literal sense, but involves a difficulty in regard to the previous existence of sin, which it implies. We may, however, explain it as referring to the power of sin which is dormant, though living, until it is aroused into activity

I died; and the commandment, which *was* unto life, 11 this I found *to be* unto death: for sin, finding occasion, through the commandment beguiled me, and 12 through it slew me. So that the law is holy, and the

through the commandment.—**And I died.** Just as sin became alive, he died; he through the knowledge and excitement of sin, entered into a moral state, which he calls death. This is further explained in what follows.

Ver. 10. **Which was unto life.** The promise of the law, covering its every 'commandment,' was 'do this and live;' its aim was 'life.'—**This.** A change of accent would call for the rendering 'the same;' but 'this' is now generally accepted. It gives a tragical force to the expression: 'this very commandment.'—**I found** (lit., 'was found by me') **to be unto death.** The aim was 'life;' as a matter of personal human experience the result was 'death.' The present misery resulting from the excitement and knowledge of sin seems to be referred to, for this only could be 'found' to be the result, as a matter of experience.

Ver. 11. **For sin,** etc. In ver. 8, which resembles this, Paul explains the excitement of evil desire through the law; namely, how sin revived, but here he explains the other phrase: 'I died.' The word 'sin' is herein more emphatic than in ver. 8. It was not in the 'law,' but 'sin' that wrought this sad result.—**Through the commandment beguiled me.** These words are to be joined together, in accordance with the analogy of ver. 8, and of the following clause. 'It first made the commandment a *provocation*, and then a means of *condemnation*. Thus what applies to Satan, that he was first man's *tempter*, and then his accuser, applies likewise to sin. This passage calls to mind the serpent in paradise, as in 2 Cor. 11: 3' (Lange). To refer this to the conviction of sin which precedes conversion seems unnecessary.—**And through it slew me.** It thus led to a consciousness of the state of sin and misery referred to in ver. 10: 'I died.' The experience here portrayed has been reproduced in every age: this is the universal effect of God's law upon sinful man whose conscience is not yet dead.

Ver. 12. **So that.** The result of the whole discussion (vers. 7-11) is not to cast doubt upon the law, but to maintain its character as worthy of God who gave it. The original suggests a second member of the sentence, which is indicated in ver. 13.—**The law is holy.** This positive character of the law Paul does not stop to prove; for the only suspicion against its holy character came from the sinful results already spoken of. But there the law was constantly condemning, which condemnation betokened that it was 'holy.'—**And the commandment.** What is true of the law as a whole, is also true of its single commandments.—**Holy, and righteous, and good.** 'Holy,' because it comes from a holy God: 'righteous,' because of its form;

13 commandment holy, and righteous, and good. Did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shewn to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good;—  
14 ceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual:

'good,' because of its end (so Bengel). As the specific commandment had in each case been used by sin to deceive and slay him, the Apostle gives this full declaration of the character of 'the commandment.'

Ver. 13. **Did then that which is good**, *i. e.*, did the commandment itself, which was 'good,' designed for beneficial results, **become death unto me**. This the Apostle denies: The law itself was neither sin (ver. 7) nor the cause of death.—**But sin**; sin became death unto me.—**That it might be shewn to be sin**. This was the design, namely, that it might be shown to be what it really is: compare the last clause.—**Working death to me through that which is good**. This was the mode in which sin was made to appear sin: by making use of what is good to produce death in men, it reveals more fully its own hideous character. 'As it is the sovereign right of good to overrule evil results for good, so it is the curse of sin to pervert the effects of what is good to evil' (from Lange).—**That**, etc. This clause is parallel to the preceding one, expressing again the purpose.—**Through the commandment**, *i. e.*, 'that which is good.'—**Exceeding sinful**. 'Such is the design of the law, so far as the salvation of sinners is concerned. It does not prescribe the conditions of salvation.' Neither is the law the means of sanctification. It cannot make us holy. On the contrary, its operation is to excite and exasperate sin—to render its power more dreadful and destructive' (Hodge). Because this is so true, it seems unlikely that what immediately follows is the distinctive experience of a Christian.

Ver. 14. **For we know**. This is again an appeal to Christian experience, but we cannot infer from this that the experience of the 'I' is distinctively Christian. This verse is a proof of ver. 13.—**The law is spiritual**; in its essence it is divine, because its characteristics are those of the Holy Spirit. This view agrees best with the contrast which follows. Other views: inspired by the Holy Spirit; related to the spiritual nature of man; fulfilled by those only who have the Holy Spirit: requiring an angelic righteousness, etc. Most of these are true, but not in accordance with the Scripture use of the word 'spiritual,' or with the context.—**But I am carnal**. The change of a single letter gives, as the better reading, the word meaning, 'made of flesh,' instead that meaning, 'of a fleshly character.' The correct reading seems to give the stronger sense, though this is denied by some, in order to defend the reference to the regenerate man. We think Paul here describes himself not as a Christian, but over against the law. For he does not use the word 'spirit' at all in

but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I  
 15 <sup>1</sup>do I know not: for not what I would, that do I  
 16 practice; but what I hate, that I do. But if what I  
 would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *work*.

this description, and applies 'spiritual' only to the law; whereas in the Christian the conflict is directly between 'flesh' and 'Spirit' (on these terms, see Excursus below). 'It is true the situation, which the Apostle thus exhibits in his own representative Ego, was for himself as an individual one long since past; but he realizes it as present and places it before the eyes like a picture, in which the standpoint of the happier present in which he now finds himself renders possible the perspective that lends to every feature of his portrait the light of clearness and truth' (Meyer).—**Sold under sin.** A permanent state of slavery is referred to: sin being personified as the master. How this state of slavery manifests itself is described in the next verse.

Ver. 15. **For that which I do** (or. 'work'). In this passage there are three Greek words translated 'do' in the A. V. We may distinguish them thus: work, practice, do.—**I know not.** This does not mean: 'I do not approve,' but that like a slave he performs ignorantly the will of his master. But Lange rightly says: 'thus one thing dawns upon him—that he acts in gloomy self-distractedness, and in contradiction of a better but helpless desire and repugnance.' (So Weiss.) The rest of the verse indicates this: **For not what I would, that do I practice; but what I hate, that I do.** The main question here is respecting these two contrasted verbs, 'would' and 'hate.' Some strengthen the former into 'love,' in the interest of an exclusive reference to the regenerate; others weaken the latter into 'do not wish.' We prefer to regard 'hate' as stronger than 'would,' while 'practise' is stronger than 'do.' This suggests that the desire for good is less strong than the hatred of evil. Passages from heathen writers express similar sentiments. It is asserted that no such 'will' exists in the unregenerate man, but this is true only when the sense of 'will' is unduly pressed. To admit that an unregenerate man can use the language of this verse, is perfectly consistent with a belief in the depravity of the human will.

Ver. 16. **But if.** This verse is a logical inference from the position of ver. 15. It is, however, the logic of a Christian applied to the condition under the law, or it may mark an advanced step in the recognition of the true position towards the law.—**What I would not, that I do.** Compare the similar clause in ver. 15. Here the weaker phrase 'would not' is substituted for 'hate.' Even this negative attitude proves the character of the law.—**I consent unto the law that it is good.** This marks an acquiescence in the high moral character of the law. This acquiescence is more than intellectual, or no conviction of sin would result. Some conviction of sin is implied,



17 good. So now it is no more I that <sup>1</sup>do it, but sin  
18 which dwelleth in me. For I know that in me, that is,  
in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present  
with me, but to <sup>1</sup>do that which is good is not.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *work*.

and must exist in every man awakened by the claims of the law. 'My conduct, therefore, so far as my desire is opposed to it, appears according to this contradiction, as a proof that I concur with the law that it is beautiful, *i. e.*, morally good; the moral excellence which the law affirms of itself (*e. g.*, Deut. 4: 8) I also agree with it in acknowledging; in point of fact, I say *yes* to it' (Meyer).

Ver. 17. **So now**, as the case stands.—**It is no more I that do** ('work') **it**, *i. e.*, 'what I would not.' I am a slave under sin, what 'I work, I know not' (ver. 16). Both 'now' and 'no more' are logical, but temporal; they point to an inference, not necessarily to a transition from a former condition into a state of grace. 'I' refers to the 'moral self-consciousness,' but there is as yet no indication that this state of things of itself does or can lead to anything better. The desire is powerless; the 'I' is enslaved.—**But sin which dwelleth in me**; the master to whom I am enslaved. 'In me' is supposed by many to differ from 'I,' since ver. 18 explains the former as 'in my flesh.' The two phrases are a verbal reproduction of the apparent duality in the person who is passing through such a moral conflict. There is no sign of release, no assertion of power to do good of which the 'I' approves. Whether the experience be that of a regenerate or unregenerate man, the moral responsibility rests on him in whom sin dwells; the description is intended to prove the powerlessness of man under the law, not to define his responsibility.

Ver. 18. **For I know**; not, 'we know,' which would point to common Christian experience. This verse proves from the experience of the man whose case is described, the truth of ver. 17.—**In me, that is, in my flesh**, in my depraved human nature; 'flesh' being here used in its strict ethical sense. Usually in this sense the antithesis is 'Spirit,' and even here that idea is implied in the spirituality of the law which produces the experience under discussion. Hence it is not necessary to assume that the case is that of a regenerate man, in order to find room for a reference to the Holy Spirit, over against the 'flesh.' The man under the law, whether before or after conversion, is here represented as becoming conscious that he is 'made of flesh,' under the conflict awakened by the law. The better desire may exist (see next clause), but *in every case* it is powerless unless the man escapes from the law to Christ.—**For to will is present with me**, lies before me. 'Will' here is the same as 'would' (vers. 15, 16, 19–21), and preserves the same general sense, of wishing, being willing, rather than of a decisive purpose or controlling desire.—**But to do** ('work') **that which is good is not**. The better

19 For the good which I would I do not: but the evil  
 20 which I would not, that I practise. But if what I  
 would not, that I do, it is no more I that <sup>1</sup>do it, but  
 21 sin which dwelleth in me. I find then <sup>2</sup>the law, that,

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *work*.<sup>2</sup> Or, *in regard of the law*.

sustained reading is followed. Wishing lies before me, but executing does not: I can and do have a desire for what is good, but I cannot and do not carry that desire into effect: this experience proves that there dwells in me, that is, in my flesh, no good thing. So far as one is 'in the flesh,' this is his highest moral state; only when 'in the Spirit' can good be truly performed.

Ver. 19. **For the good**, etc. This verse is a proof of the last clause of ver. 18; and ver. 20, which is an inference from this verse, leads back to the statement of ver. 17.—**But the evil which I would not, that I practise.** This is the strongest expression of sinfulness yet made. Paul, looking back from his Christian point of view, no doubt includes more than heathen writers have done when using similar expressions; but what he says is to a certain extent the experience of every man whose conscience is affected by the law.

Ver. 20. **But if what I would not**, etc. Since this is the case (as ver. 19 shows), then the position of ver. 17 is sustained: **it is no more I**, etc. The repetition in this clause is exact, but in the phrase 'I would,' some emphasis rests on 'I.' This is taken by many as indicating a progress in thought. But there is no sign as yet of a more hopeful condition. The progress is still toward wretchedness, despite, or perhaps because of, this increased desire.

Ver. 21. **I find then the law**, etc. The literal sense of the verse is: I find then the law to me wishing (willing) to do the good, that to me the evil is present. Some refer 'the law' to the Mosaic law, because that has been in mind up to this point. But it is very difficult to explain the verse on this theory. Moreover, in what immediately follows (vers. 22, 23), 'law' is used in a wider sense, and 'the law of God' is specified, as if the term here used had another reference. We prefer, therefore, the usual view: 'I find then (as the summing of my experience, vers. 14-20) the law (of moral contradiction) when I wish to do good, that evil is present with me.' Vers. 22, 23, then introduce the opposing laws which make the contradiction. (Meyer thus explains the verse: 'I find, then, while my will is directed to the law in order to do good, that evil is present with me.' Another view is given in the R. V. marg.)

Vers. 22, 23. We have four phrases contrasted in pairs: 'The law of God'; 'another law in my members,' etc.; 'the law of my mind'; 'the law of sin and death,' etc. Each phrase has its distinct meaning, while those forming pairs are closely related: The law of God is the Mosaic law, but the law of the mind is the same law so far as it is *operative* in the mind; the law in the members is the law of sin, so

22 to me who would do good, evil is present. For I delight <sup>1</sup>in the law of God after the inward man: 23 but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me unto

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *with*.

far as it is operative in the members; the extreme contrast is between the law of God and the law of sin and death. 'The law' of ver. 21 is this principle of moral conflict which the Apostle found in his experience.

Ver. 22. **For I delight in the law of God.** 'For' introduces an explanation of ver. 21. 'Delight in' is stronger than 'consent unto' (ver. 16), but must not be pressed too far, since ver. 21, of which this is an explanation, is a summing up of the experience in vers. 14-20. Meyer explains: 'I rejoice with the law of God, so that its joy (the law being personified) is also mine' (see R. V. marg.). But this is not necessary, and too strong.—**After the inward man.** Those who refer the experience to the regenerate man consider this phrase as identical with 'the new man,' under the influence of the Holy Spirit. But why is the influence of the Spirit so carefully kept out of view? Some say: Because Paul would set the conflict in the strongest light. But it is unlike him to keep Christ and the Holy Spirit in the back-ground. We prefer, then, to distinguish between 'the inward man' and the 'new man.' The former is the internal sphere of spiritual influence where the law operates: in the regenerate man this has become the new man, but before renewal of the Holy Spirit the inner man, despite all its agreement with the law, even when in aroused feeling it might be said to delight in the law of God, is in a helpless condition, all the more miserable, because of its approval of the law. When the Christian is 'under the law,' his delight may be more pronounced, but so long as he seeks sanctification through the law, he is quite as helpless. 'The inward man' here is nearly equivalent to 'mind' in vers. 23, 25; and also to 'spirit,' so far as that term exclusively applies to the highest part of man's nature, irrespective of the inworking of the Holy Spirit. (See Excursus below.)

Ver. 23. **But I see a different law.** Not simply 'another,' but a 'different,' one; comp. Gal. 1: 6, 7. Paul represents himself as witnessing the conflict within his own person.—**In my members.** To be joined with 'law,' rather than with 'warring' (Fritzsche), or with 'see' (Weiss). This does not mean 'in my flesh,' *i. e.*, carnal nature, over against my renewed nature, but points to the members of the body, as the locality where the working of the opposing law is most *evident*. It is not implied that these members are the sole seat of sin. This is unpauline, whether applied to the regenerate or to the unregenerate.—**Warring against the law of my mind.** The conflict is against the law of God, not as such, but as operating in, or be-

captivity <sup>1</sup> under the law of sin which is in my mem-  
bers. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *in*. Many ancient authorities read *to*.

longing to, the 'mind.' This term refers to the higher part of man's nature, or spirit. Meyer explains it as 'the reason in its practical activity,' but see ver. 22, and Excursus below. It does not mean the unfallen human spirit, there being no trace of such a notion in the New Testament. Nor on the other hand is 'mind' here equivalent to renewed nature. In that case we would find some hint of the Holy Spirit's influence. So far as a man is living under the law, the best that his 'mind' can do is to present a powerless opposition to the law in the members.—**Bringing me into captivity**, 'taking me prisoner,' **under the law of sin**. 'In' is the literal sense of the better established reading. The law in the members is the warrior that takes the captive, the law of sin is the victor under whom the captive is held; the two laws are practically identical. A wretched condition (ver. 24), but some recognition of it is a necessary preliminary to deliverance.

Ver. 24. **O wretched man that I am!** Some would inclose this verse, and the first clause of ver. 25 in parenthesis; but this is unnecessary. The word 'wretched' implies 'exhausted by hard labor;' comp. Matt. 11: 18. The prominent ideas are of helplessness and wretchedness; the cry for the deliverance follows. A believer may thus speak, doubtless often does; but this condition is precisely that from which we are delivered.—**Who shall deliver me**. Not merely a wish: would that I were delivered, but rather: who will deliver me, who can do it; not without a reference to help from a *person*. Those who apply the passage to the regenerate must assume here a temporary absence of relief. It does apply to the regenerate man, when by seeking sanctification by the law he forgets Christ, and deprives himself of the help of the Spirit.—**Out of the body of this death**, or, 'this body of death?' The interpretations are quite various: 1. This body of death; (*a*) this mortal body. But this makes the body the seat of sin, or amounts to a desire for death; both of which are unpauline and contrary to the context. (*b*) Still less satisfactory is the view that personifies death as a monster with a body. 2. 'The body of this death.' This is preferable, since the emphasis in the original seems to rest upon 'this death.' There is, however, no reference to physical death, but to the whole condition of helplessness, guilt, and misery just described, which is, in effect, spiritual death. But 'body' may be taken either: (*a*) literally, or (*b*) figuratively. The literal sense suggests that the body is the seat of sin, and may be made equivalent to a desire for death. Meyer guards it thus: 'Who shall deliver me out of bondage under the law of sin into moral freedom, in which my body shall no longer serve as the seat of this shameful death.' This agrees with the reference to 'members' in ver. 23. But the figurative sense has more to recommend it.

25 me out of <sup>1</sup>the body of this death? <sup>2</sup>I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then I myself

<sup>1</sup> Or, *this body of death.*

<sup>2</sup> Many ancient authorities read *But thanks be to God.*

'Body' is the organism of 'this death;' it clings to me as closely as the body. We thus avoid on the one hand making this a desire for death, and on the other giving to 'body' that ethical sense which is peculiar to 'flesh.' The ethical idea is this in 'death' not in 'body.' A turning point is now reached. It is probable that even this cry is uttered 'in full consciousness of the deliverance which Christ has effected, and as leading to the expression of thanks which follows' (Alford, following De Wette).

Ver. 25. **I thank God**, or, 'thanks be to God;' it being difficult to decide between the two. (Some authorities read: but thanks *be* to God.) This thanksgiving is for deliverance: it is a deliverance **through Jesus Christ our Lord**. Not simply that the thanksgiving is through Him, but the fact that the thanks to God are due to Jesus Christ. Here is the key-note of a life distinctively Christian over against the attempt to live better under the law.—**So then**. This sums up the whole: since this is the conflict and a hopeless one until Christ delivers. Others would connect this with ver. 24.—**I myself**, etc. The two leading interpretations are: (1.) 'I myself as the same man,' live this divided life; (2.) 'I of myself,' apart from Christ, thus live. (See the rendering of the Am. Com.) If (1) be adopted, and applied to the man who has uttered the thanksgiving, the inference would be that such discord was the normal condition of the Christian. To apply it to the unregenerate man seems objectionable, for how can such an one be said to serve the law of God. On the whole, then, (2.) is more satisfactory. 'I in myself, notwithstanding whatever progress in righteousness the Spirit of Christ may have brought in me, or will work in this life, am still most imperfect; with my mind, indeed, I serve the law of God, but with my flesh the law of sin; and, tried by the law, could not be justified, but would come under condemnation, if viewed *in myself*, and not in Christ Jesus' (Forbes). This suggests the connection with chap. 8. To make an alternative: either with the mind, etc., or with the flesh, is not grammatical.—**With the mind**, or, 'with my mind, indeed. Not 'with the Spirit,' for it is the man of the law who is still spoken of, even though he has been delivered and looks back upon the worst of the conflict.—**With the flesh the law of sin**. The service of the law, whose excellence is recognized by the mind, is attempted, but the flesh interferes; as the ruling power it brings into captivity *in every case* where the mere service of law, even of the law of God, is the aim. That the Christian is not ruled by the flesh is his distinctive privilege, but obedience from legalistic motives gives the flesh fresh power. Hence we find here, even after the thanksgiving, a quasi-confession of defeat, to connect with the next chapter.

The whole passage seems, by its alternations, its choice of words, as well as its position in the Epistle, to point to an experience which is

with the mind serve\* the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

\*For *I myself with the mind serve* read *I of myself with the mind, indeed, serve.*—*Am. Com.*

produced by the holy, just, and good law of God, rather than the gospel of Jesus Christ; so that even the out-burst of Christian gratitude is followed by a final recurrence to the conflict, which is, indeed, ever-recurring, so long as we seek holiness through the law rather than through Christ.

#### EXCURSUS ON SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL TERMS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

1. **BODY.** This generally refers to the physical body, though it often suggests the organism of the body. A living body is usually meant. Figuratively it is applied to the Church. In a few passages where it seems to imply sinfulness, it may be interpreted in a figurative sense, as referring to the organism of sin (Rom. 6: 6; 7: 24; Col. 2: 11), or literally to the body as far as it has become the organ of sin. The thought that the body is the source of sin, or even its chief seat, is unwarranted alike by Scripture and by experience.

2. **SOUL.** The word we translate soul often means 'life,' animal life; the word which represents eternal life, life in the highest sense, is a different one. 'Soul' may mean the whole immaterial part of man, or it may be distinguished from 'spirit.' But the distinction is difficult to define, see under 3. It does *not* mean the fallen part of our immaterial nature over against an unfallen part called 'spirit,' nor is it to be limited to the animal life. The Old Testament usage seems decisive on both points. It is unfortunate that the influence of Hebrew modes of thought has not been sufficiently recognized in the discussions about this and kindred terms. Furthermore the analytic tendency of many modern systems has led to the acceptance of a division where the Scriptures suggest only a distinction.

3. **SPIRIT.** This term, the Hebrew equivalent of which is very common in the Old Testament, has in the New Testament a number of meanings. It is derived from the word meaning 'to blow,' and retains in rare instances (John 4: 8; Heb. 1: 7) its early sense of *wind*. We often use it now as equivalent to temper, disposition; but in the New Testament it rarely, if ever, refers to this alone. It is, however, applied to evil (unclean,) spirits, and to good angels. In these cases it refers to a mode of being, irrespective of the moral quality, which is defined by the context.

Aside from these incidental meanings, the word is used in the New Testament in three senses:—

(a) The *theological* sense, referring to the Holy Spirit.

(b) The *anthropological* sense, referring to the spirit of man, as part of his nature.

(c) The *soteriological* sense, referring to the indwelling Holy Spirit, or, to the spirit of man as informed by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

(a) The prevailing sense in the New Testament is the *theological one*, that is, it means the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. In the contrast with 'flesh' (see below) it usually has this sense, but frequently in the modified form which is discussed under (c).

(b) The *anthropological* sense is not very common. It must be insisted upon, rather for the purpose of defining the other senses and kindred terms, than for its own sake. In 1 Thess. 5: 23, we find a reference to 'body, soul and spirit,' but even here Christians

are spoken of. At the same time we infer from this passage, from the Old Testament distinctions, and from Heb. 4: 12, 'that in the original structure of man there is something—yet remaining, needing, and capable of sanctification—corresponding to the three terms, body, soul, and spirit.' It is implied in 1 Thess. 5: 23, that the spirit needs sanctification, and that the body and soul also are to be preserved for God. Holding fast to these points, we shall escape many of the false inferences drawn from the theory of the tri-partite nature of man (trichotomy). On the other hand we must not go to the extreme of holding that the 'spirit' is the renewed nature, hence that man has not a 'spirit' before regeneration. 'It must be held fast, that man could not receive the Spirit of God if he were not himself a spiritual being; yet it is a supposition of the Scriptures, that, since the fall, the spiritual nature is bound in the natural man, and does not come to its actuality' (Lange). This view includes 'the mind,' and 'the inward man' (see 5. below) under the term 'spirit,' making the spirit the sphere in which Divine influences begin their operations, like God in mode of being, but the very inmost seat of *moral unlikeness* to Him. Before renewal the 'spirit' is itself under the power of the 'flesh' (see 4., (1.), (b.). below). The New Testament never contrasts 'flesh' with this sense of 'spirit.' Hence this *anthropological* sense is rare compared with that which follows.

(c.) The *soteriological* sense: The Holy Spirit in the human spirit, or, the human spirit acted upon by the Holy Spirit. As distinguished from (a.) this is the *subjective* sense, as distinguished from (b. it is a *theological* sense. In Paul's writings it is very frequent, and we find it expressed in the Gospels: 'that which is born of the Spirit is spirit' (John 3: 6); comp. Matt 26: 4; Mark 14: 38. This sense includes the term 'new man;' comp. also Eph. 4: 24; Col. 3: 10.

4. FLESH. (1.) *Physical* sense. In the Old Testament this term is applied to 'man with the adjunct idea of frailty' (Tholuck), but the idea of depravity is not suggested. In the New Testament the physical sense occurs, with a reference to the early life and relations (Gal. 2: 20; 2 Cor. 10: 3; Eph. 2: 15; Phil. 1: 22, 24; Col. 1: 22, etc.). In these instances the contrast with man's new relation to God is only negatively implied. In other cases the term is almost = body, or to the material of which the body is composed. 'According to the flesh,' as applied to Christ, refers to His human nature (or, descent), probably with the idea of frailty, as in the Old Testament use. Here, too, we may trace the notion of physiological descent, suggesting the transmission of nature, a thought not remote from the strictly ethical sense; comp. John 3: 6: 'that which is born of the flesh is flesh.'

(2.) The *ethical* sense of flesh is recognized by all commentators. It is in contrast with 'Spirit,' either expressed or implied, and this gives the key to its meaning, *i. e.*, that it refers to our unregenerate depraved nature, but the exact significance has been frequently discussed.

(a.) How much of man's nature is included under the term 'flesh,' when used in the ethical sense? We answer more than the body, or the body with its animal life and appetites. The Bible nowhere justifies the Pagan view that sin is confined to our animal life. Nor can we limit the term to body and soul, excluding the human spirit from the empire of the flesh. The distinction between soul and spirit is not essentially an ethical one; the only passage suggesting this is 1 Cor. 2: 14, where 'spiritual,' however, implies the influence of the Holy Spirit. The antithesis to 'flesh' in this ethical sense never is the unregenerate human spirit. Even in Rom. 7: 18, 25, where 'inward man,' and 'mind' are contrasted with 'flesh,' the real antithesis is

to be found in ver. 14 : 'the law is spiritual, but I am carnal,' which is illustrated in the description that follows. 'Flesh,' therefore, means, not a tendency or direction of life in one part of man's nature, but the whole human nature, body, soul, and spirit, separated from God, the human nature we inherit 'according to the flesh,' from Adam. Meyer and some recent English commentators fail to give the full force (comp. Weiss, *Bib. Theology*, and throughout on *Romans*).

(b.) This human nature, termed 'flesh,' is essentially alienated from God; antagonism to God is the essence of sin. Its positive principle is *selfishness*, for after God is rejected, self becomes supreme. The human nature, thus alienated from God, with selfishness as its ruling principle, seeks its gratification in the *creature*, for it has forsaken God, and it requires some object external to itself. This devotion to the creature has a higher form as sensuousness, and deems itself noble, in its intellectual and esthetic pursuit of other things more than God. But the course of heathenism, as portrayed in chap. 1, shows that it is an easy step to sensuality, the lower form of fleshly gratification. Hence this ethical sense of 'flesh' has been confused with its lowest manifestations, namely, physical appetites. But the true definition is: 'Flesh is the whole nature of man, turned away from God, in the supreme interest of self, devoted to the creature.' This definition links together ungodliness and sin, and implies the inability of the law, and the necessity of the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit.

5. MIND. The word translated 'mind' in the preceding section is *νοῦς*, and may be distinguished from several other Greek terms occasionally rendered by the same English word. As indicated in the above comments, 'mind' here is not equivalent to renewed nature, nor does it include merely the intellectual faculties. It is rather the active organ of the human spirit, the practical reason, usually as directed to moral questions. Hence it properly covers what we term the moral sense, or conscience. But the Scriptural anthropology does not favor the view that this 'mind' of itself is not depraved; for it is used several times in connection with the worst forms of heathenism, and in other passages obviously means a sinful mind (chap. 1: 28; Eph. 4: 17; Col. 2: 18; 1 Tim. 6: 5; 2 Tim. 3: 8; Tit. 1: 15). The 'inward man' (ver. 22) is practically equivalent to this term, and represents the same moral status: before regeneration under the dominion of the flesh, but made the sphere of the operations of the Holy Spirit, so that a 'new man' results, in whom the Holy Spirit dwells. But both 'mind' and 'inward man' may cover the whole immaterial nature of man; the former in its moral and intellectual aspects; the latter in its theological aspects (so Ellicott).

6. HEART. Although this term occurs with comparative infrequency in this Epistle, it is important to understand its application in the New Testament. More distinctly than any of the other terms it shows the influence of the Old Testament. It is regarded as the central organ of the entire human personality, and includes what we distinguish as intellect and feeling, sometimes the will also. It is the organ of both soul and spirit, and yet is sometimes distinguished from the former (comp. the sum of the commandments: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,' etc., never from the latter, although occasionally used as equivalent to it (comp. Col. 2: 5 with 1 Thess. 2: 17). Hence it is inferred that it is more closely allied to 'spirit' than to 'soul;' but we must beware of making divisions, where only phases of a vital unity are concerned. The important point to be remembered is, that while 'heart' includes the affections, the term in the Scriptures does not imply the



## CHAPTER 8: 1-17.

*The Life in the Spirit contrasted with the Life after the Flesh.*

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them contrast we make between 'head' and 'heart,' *i. e.*, intellect and affections. In chap. 10: 9, 10, believing is predicated of the 'heart,' but in contrast with confessing with the 'mouth,' not with intellectual credence. Hence the phrase 'new heart' implies far more than a change of feeling, just as 'repentance' suggests more than our English 'change of mind,' which is the literal sense of the Greek. For 'mind' and 'heart' alike, according to the Hebrew conceptions, had moral aspects which were the controlling and important ones. 'Heart,' therefore, when used in the New Testament in a psychological (not physiological) sense, implies a moral quality, but what that moral quality is depends on the connection. In the case of the regenerate man the 'heart' is spoken of as if it were the seat of the Holy Spirit's influence (chap. 5: 5; 2 Cor. 1: 22; Gal. 4: 6; Eph. 3: 16, 17).—The incidental meanings of the term may be readily determined.

Clearly, then, the New Testament use of terms serves to emphasize the language of the Apostle in ver. 24: 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' All the powers and organs of human nature are powerless from this organism of sin, until through Jesus Christ our Lord deliverance comes.

## CHAPTER 8.

## III. THE LIFE IN THE SPIRIT OVER AGAINST THE FAILURE OF THE LAW; THE GOSPEL AS THE POWER OF GOD UNTO PRESENT SALVATION FROM SIN.

This chapter is 'the climax of the Epistle' (Tholuck). The gospel is a present power unto salvation; the law has proven a failure, both in justifying (chap. 3) and in sanctifying men (chap. 7), but those who are in Christ Jesus, not only are justified, but also have a new life in the Holy Spirit. Hence Meyer gives as the theme of the chapter: 'the happy condition of a man in Christ.' Hodge prefers the heading: 'the security of the believer.'—The whole chapter may be summed up thus: the life in the Spirit leads to fellowship with Christ in suffering and glory (vers. 1-17); in this fellowship of suffering we have three grounds of encouragement insuring our blessedness, attesting our security (ver. 18-30); the believer has nothing to fear, for nothing can separate him from the love of God (vers. 31-39). 'This chapter carries us into the inmost circle and heart of Christianity; it treats of that peculiar state of beatitude of refined and chastened joy, for which no form of secularism is able to provide even the remotest equivalent' (Sanday).

(1.) *The Life in the Spirit contrasted with the Life after the Flesh*, vers. 1-17.

The Christian is free from condemnation (ver. 1), because he is freed from the law of sin (ver. 2), a result which the law could not accomplish, but which is accomplished by God through Christ (vers. 3, 4). Hence he lives according to the Spirit, not according to the flesh, for the former life is true life, the latter is death, and those who are in this condition cannot please God (vers. 5-8). The test of true spiritual life is

2 that are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin

the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the pledge of the resurrection of our bodies (vers. 9-11). Therefore we ought not to live after the flesh, but through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body (vers. 12, 13), being sons of God (ver. 14), having the witness of the Spirit of adoption (vers. 15, 16), and thus assured of the future glory which will follow the present suffering in fellowship with Christ (ver. 17).

Ver. 1. **There is therefore now**, at this time. 'Therefore' sums up what precedes. But the exact connection is disputed. It may be joined either (1.) with the thanksgiving, at the beginning of ver. 25; (2.) or with the whole of ver. 25; (3.) or with the entire preceding section. With the view we have taken of the previous description, it seems best, to connect it with the thanksgiving. Meyer finds 'now' explained in ver. 2, 'now that Christ has freed me.' This is really taking up the thanksgiving again. Some, who refer the preceding experience to the regenerate, explain thus: 'Although I am thus divided in service, still, being in Christ Jesus, there is now therefore,' etc.—**No condemnation.** 'No' is in emphatic position. Some confine this to the act of justification at the beginning of the Christian life, but it is better to refer it to the state of justification which culminates in final acquittal and glory. For here the Apostle is treating of those who are in Christ Jesus, and the context points to the Spirit's work of sanctification.—**In Christ Jesus.** In vital union with Him; the phrase being a deeply significant one; comp. John 15: 1-7; Eph. 1: 23. The clause, 'who walk not,' etc., is to be rejected, being probably taken from ver. 4. This addition weakens the Apostle's statement, by making the walk appear as the ground of 'no condemnation.'

Ver. 2. **For** introduces the proof that there is 'no condemnation.'—**Law of the Spirit of life.** 'Law' is here to be taken in its wide sense, the principle, ruling power, etc. The reference is not to the moral law, or the Mosaic law, or to the law of the mind, nor yet to the gospel as a system, but to the new principle of living which comes from the working of the Holy Spirit, here called the Spirit of life, because it gives life, works life in us.—**In Christ Jesus.** This should be joined with what follows. The deliverance took place in virtue of union to Him who fulfilled the law and delivers from its bondage.—**Made me free.** The reference is to a single act; not, however, to justification, but to the first act of ethical emancipation which attends it, because the Spirit then begins its work. The whole verse refers to what occurs in the man who is in Christ Jesus.—**The law of sin and death.** Not the Mosaic law, as those hold who refer 'law of the Spirit of life' to the gospel system, but rather, as chap. 7: 23-25 indicates, the old principle of sin which held us captive, and which had 'death,' spiritual and eternal, as its consequence. It is this consequence which is denied in ver. 1. There is no con-

3 and of death. For what the law could not do,<sup>1</sup> in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his

<sup>1</sup> Or, *wherein*.

demnation, not only because in Christ Jesus we have the ground of full justification, but because, at our justification, in virtue of our union with Christ, we receive from the Holy Spirit a new principle of life, an act of emancipation occurs, which has as its development and consequence progressive sanctification.

Ver. 3. **For what the law could not do**; lit., 'the impossible (thing) of the law.' The Mosaic law is certainly meant. What was impossible for the law to do, God did, *i. e.*, condemned sin, etc. This is better than to explain: 'in view of the powerlessness of the law.'—**In that it was weak through the flesh.** Its weakness has been proven by the experience of chap. 7, and this was 'through the flesh,' for this depraved nature was the means of setting forth its weakness. 'In that' is almost equivalent to 'because,' though the marginal rendering suggests another view.—**God, sending his own Son.** It was by sending Him, that He accomplished what was impossible for the law. 'His own Son,' preëxisting before He was sent, and that too *as Son*, in a specific sense.—**In the likeness of sinful flesh** ('of the flesh of sin'). Notice the careful wording of this description of the humanity of Christ. The characteristic of 'flesh,' *i. e.*, our ordinary human nature, is 'sin'; in the 'likeness' of this the Son of God appeared. He was entirely human, hence we do not find here, 'in the likeness of flesh'; He was entirely sinless, hence he was not 'in the flesh of sin,' but only 'in the likeness of the flesh of sin.'—**And as an offering for sin** (and for sin, Am. Com.). The Eng. Com. restrict this clause to expiation for sin; but this seems a forced interpretation of the words. The idea of expiation is of course included, but the reference is more general: 'in order by expiating sin to destroy it' (Philippi).—**Condemned sin in the flesh.** This was what the law could not do. 'Sin' has the article in the original, pointing to the 'sin' on account of which the Law of God was sent into the world. 'In the flesh' is to be joined with 'condemned,' referring to the human nature which Christ has in common with us. It seems objectionable to take it in the ethical sense, or to apply it only to the human nature of Christ. 'Sin had tyrannized over us *in* our flesh, as the seat of its empire; and by our flesh, as its instrument and weapon. But God used our flesh as an instrument for our deliverance, and for the condemnation of sin, and for the establishment of His own empire in us' (Wordsworth). As the Apostle is treating of the emancipation from the power of sin (ver. 2), it is unnecessary to confine this condemnation of sin in the flesh to the expiation of Christ. By sending Christ, God condemned sin entirely, both as to its punitive and polluting effects. The one great act by which sin was condemned in the flesh was the death of Christ, and this expiating act was the delivering act which should destroy the power of sin.

own Son in the likeness of <sup>1</sup>sinful flesh <sup>2</sup>and as an  
 4 offering for sin,\* condemned sin in the flesh; that the  
 8 ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who  
 5 walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For they  
 that are after the flesh do mind the things of the  
 flesh; but they that are after the spirit † the things of

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *flesh of sin*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *and for sin*

\* Let marg. <sup>2</sup> (*and for sin*) and text exchange places.—*Am. Com.*

<sup>3</sup> Or, *requirement*.

† For *spirit* read *Spirit*.—*Am. Com.*

For while the law could, to a certain extent, condemn and punish sin, what was utterly impossible for it was the removal of sin. Those in Christ have in the fact of His death the ground of pardon and the pledge of purity. The removal of sin is the end to be accomplished, as the next verse shows.

Ver. 4. **That the ordinance of the law.** The word is that used in chap. 5: 16, 18, in the sense of 'righteous verdict,' or, 'act of righteousness,' and in Luke 1: 6; chaps. 1: 32; 2: 26, in the sense of 'ordinance,' *i. e.*, righteous requirement. We explain it here as meaning 'the righteous act' (viewing all the acts as forming a unity) that meets the requirements of the law.) Some would refer this to the imputation of Christ's righteousness as the ground of our justification, but according to our view of the whole passage it means the actual holiness of the believer.—**Might be fulfilled.** The fulfilment is wrought by God who sent his Son (ver. 3) and who sends his Spirit to fulfil the purpose of His grace.—**In us;** not, 'among us,' nor, 'through us,' nor yet, 'on us,' but 'in us.' This points to actual holiness; most of the other interpretations grow out of the reference to justification. The ideal aim of the Christian life is set forth.—**Who walk.** etc. 'Who are of such a kind as walk,' etc. This part of the verse is an explanation of the character of those in whom the fulfilment takes place, and neither the result, nor the cause of what precedes.—**Not after the flesh.** Here, and in the rest of the section, 'flesh' has its strict ethical sense (see Excursus at close of chap. 7).—**But after the Spirit.** The reference here, as well as in the subsequent verses, seems to be to the Holy Spirit. Others explain: the spiritual nature imparted by the Holy Spirit (the renewed nature); the subjective spiritual life-principle. Here especially any subjective sense is inappropriate, for 'he walks according to the Spirit, who follows the guidance, the impelling and regulating power (ver. 2), of the Holy Spirit' (Meyer). A reference to the human spirit alone is preposterous, in view of the Pauline anthropology.

Ver. 5. **For they,** etc. In chap. 7 the contrast was between the workings of the law and the flesh in the same person; in vers. 5-8 the Apostle contrasts two classes of persons; showing why the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in one class and cannot be in the

6 the spirit. For the mind of the flesh is death; but  
 7 the mind of the spirit\* is life and peace; because the  
 mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not  
 subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be:  
 8 and they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

\* For *spirit* read *Spirit*.—*Am. Com.*

other.—**That are after the flesh.** The same idea as in ver. 4, but under a slightly different aspect: walking according to the flesh pointing to the outward life; being according to the flesh, to the carnal state.—**Mind the things of the flesh;** they think of, care for, strive to obtain, those things which belong to the 'flesh,' which includes all that gratifies the depraved heart; 'not merely sensual things, but all things which do not belong to the category of the things of the Spirit' (Hodge).—**The things of the Spirit,** those things which belong to the Holy Spirit.

Ver. 6. **For the mind of the flesh.** Explanation of ver. 5. The word 'mind' corresponds with the verb 'mind' in the last verse; it is that which embodies the thinking caring, striving; the disposition, we might call it.—**Is death;** amounts to death. 'Death is here conceived of as present (comp. 1 Tim. 5: 6; Eph. 2: 1, 5), not merely as a result, but as a characteristic mark, an immanent definition of the carnal mind' (Philippi).—**The mind of the Spirit.** Here also the Holy Spirit; the minding, striving, which comes from the Holy Spirit.—**Life and peace.** 'Life' is to be taken in its full sense, in contrast with 'death'; 'peace' is added, probably to prepare for ver. 7, where 'enmity' is introduced.

Ver. 7. **Because the mind** (the same word as in ver. 6) **of the flesh.** Proof that the mind of the flesh is death (ver. 6); in vers. 10, 11, it is proved that the mind of the spirit is life and peace, though that is implied here.—**Enmity against God.** This is equivalent to death.—**For** introduces an illustration and evidence of this enmity.—**It is not subject to the law of God.** This fact, already set forth in the previous description of man (chap. 1: 11) and of the work of the law (chap. 7), shows that the enmity is not latent, but active.—**Neither indeed can it be.** 'For it is not even possible for it' (Meyer). Paul declares that the cause of non-submission to the law of God, which is a proof of enmity to God, is the fact that the mind of the flesh has no ability to produce this submission, being essentially antagonism to God. Possibility of conversion and ability to believe are not under discussion; these imply the death of the flesh as a ruling principle.

Ver. 8. **And.** Not, 'so then,' but a simple continuation of the thought of ver. 7.—**They that are in the flesh.** Substantially the same as: 'they that are according to the flesh' (ver. 5), but stronger, and presenting a better contrast to the full gospel phrases: 'in Christ' 'in the Spirit.'—**Cannot please God,** because of the character of

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit,\* if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.  
10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of

\* For *spirit* read *Spirit*.—*Am. Com.*

the mind of the flesh. By this negative expression, 'it is said, in a mild way, that they are objects of Divine displeasure, children of wrath' (Lange).

Ver. 9. **But ye**, etc. The Apostle now turns to the other class, spoken of in ver. 5, gladly using direct address, for 'ye' is emphatic in the original.—**If so be**. This conditional form is 'an indirect incitement to self-examination' (Meyer), and does not imply special doubt.—**The Spirit of God dwell in you**. In the previous clause the 'Spirit' is represented as the element in which they live; here as the indwelling power which enables them to live in this element. This change of figure is quite common in the New Testament language respecting the Holy Spirit. That the Holy Spirit is here meant ought not to be doubted. 'In you' must not be weakened into 'among you.'—**But if**. This is a pure hypothesis, and does not imply that such was the case.—**Hath not the Spirit of Christ**. There is no better evidence of careless reading of the Scripture than the frequent use of this clause as if it referred to the temper or disposition shown by Christ. It means the Holy Spirit which belongs to, or proceeds from, Christ, this designation being adopted to prove the truth that those who have not this Spirit are 'none of Christ's.' The whole passage has an important bearing on the doctrine of the Trinity, especially as related to Christian experience. It must be admitted that such statements generally have reference to the economy of grace, but they form the basis for the doctrinal statements of the Church. This text has therefore been a proof text for the Western doctrine of the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father *and the Son* (*filioque*, Synod of Toledo A. D. 589). This was the final contribution to the doctrinal statement of the Trinity. The Greek Church admits that the Holy Spirit is sent by the Son as well as the Father, but denies that He *proceeds eternally*, or, metaphysically from the Son. The *sending* belongs to the economical Trinity; the *eternally proceeding*, to the ontological Trinity.—**He is none of his**. He does not belong to Christ, perhaps implying that the Spirit unites the members of the mystical body of Christ to their Head, and that without this Spirit such union does not exist.

Ver. 10. **And if Christ is in you**. Not doubt, but rather a suggestion that this is the case; in contrast with the latter part of ver. 9. Notice that the indwelling of the Spirit of God, having the Spirit of Christ, belonging to Christ, having Christ in us, are only varied expressions of the same great fact. The underlying basis of the mystical union of Christ and the believer is the yet more mysterious unity of the Persons of the Godhead.—**The body is dead**. This refers

sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness.  
 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the  
 dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus  
 from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies  
<sup>1</sup>through his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *because of*.

to the certain fact of physical death, since ver. 11 takes up this thought. Every other interpretation gives to 'body' an ethical sense, which seems unwarranted; all the more because the word 'dead' is not that corresponding with 'death,' as used by the Apostle in the wide sense. — **Because of sin.** Not because of the special sins of the body, nor because the body is the source and seat of sin, but because the body has shared in the results of sin, and thus becomes a prey to physical death. It will ultimately share in the full blessings of redemption (ver. 11). — **But the spirit is life.** Not the Holy Spirit, but the renewed human spirit, in which the Holy Spirit dwells. This is suggested by the entire context. 'Life,' not, 'alive,' as if to give a more extended meaning to this side of the contrast. Hence we may include spiritual life, here and hereafter, the life eternal, beginning now. — **Because of righteousness.** Some refer this to the imputed righteousness, but while this, as the basis of the life, is not to be excluded, the whole argument points to actual righteousness of life, inwrought by the Holy Spirit, in virtue of union to Christ.

Ver. 11. **But if, etc.** The body will indeed die, but, despite this, grace will triumph even over physical death; even the body that must die will ultimately share fully in redemption, at the resurrection, through the indwelling Holy Spirit. — **Him that raised up Jesus from the dead, etc.** This expression has a demonstrative force here: the fact that the indwelling Spirit is the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is a pledge that the spiritual quickening will be followed by the physical quickening. — **Shall quicken also your mortal bodies.** This is most naturally referred to the final resurrection of the body; for, although 'quicken' might of itself include something already begun, the word 'also' (or, as it might better be rendered, 'even') seems to limit it to the bodily resurrection. This truth of revelation is so important, and so distinctive, that it deserves the emphasis thus given to it. 'Even' the body which here succumbs to the effects of sin, shall be quickened; the victory of redemption will be complete when this occurs. — **Through, or, 'on account of,' his Spirit that dwelleth in you.** It is difficult to decide between the two readings. The Sinaitic manuscript supports 'through,' and has turned the current of opinion in favor of that reading. As early as the latter part of the fourth century the variation was introduced into a controversy respecting the Divinity of the Holy Spirit. 'Through' would point to the fact that the Holy Spirit which is now working moral renovation in us will be the Agent in

12 So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh,  
 13 to live after the flesh: for if ye live after the flesh,  
 ye must die; but if by the spirit\* ye <sup>1</sup>mortify† the  
 14 <sup>2</sup>deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as

\* For *spirit* read *Spirit*.—*Am. Com.*

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *make to die.*

† For *mortify* read *put to death* and omit marg. <sup>1</sup>.—*Am. Com.*

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *doings.*

completing the triumph in the resurrection of the body. 'Because of' may include this thought, but would refer mainly to the indwelling Spirit as the pledge of the resurrection. If this Spirit now dwells in the body of the believer, that body will not be left unredeemed. In either case, the reference seems to be to the final resurrection, rather than to any present moral quickening. This passage, moreover, indicates that the 'spiritual body' spoken of in 1 Cor. 15: 44, is a body prepared for the human spirit entirely renovated by the Holy Spirit.

Ver. 12. **So then**; as the phrase is usually translated; here introducing an exhortation based upon the previous statement; because the indwelling of the Spirit involves such glorious results.—**We are debtors, not to the flesh.** 'Flesh' is here used in the ethical sense; the antithesis is suggested indirectly in ver. 13. 'Not' applies to the following clause also: **to live after the flesh.** The truths of vers. 10, 11 imply that we are under obligation *not* to do this, but on the contrary to live after the Spirit. Strictly rendered, this clause is one of design, in order to live after the flesh.

Ver. 13. **For**, etc. If you lived thus, you would not fulfil the glorious destiny announced in vers. 10, 11. Hence this is a proof of ver. 12.—**Ye must die**, are about to die. Death in the fullest sense is here meant, not eternal death alone, and certainly not physical death, which comes to all men; comp. ver. 10.—**But if ye by the Spirit**; the Holy Spirit, the agent of this process.—**Mortify (put to death, Am. Com.) the deeds of the body.** 'Deeds,' or, 'practices,' has usually a bad sense in the New Testament, while the 'body' is here regarded as the organ of sin, having evil practices which the Holy Spirit enables us to put to death, to exterminate. The term 'body,' is not equivalent to 'flesh,' here or elsewhere.—**Ye shall live.** 'Not *are about to live*; this life being no natural consequence of a course of mortifying the deeds of the body, but the gift of God through Christ; and coming, therefore in the form of an assurance, "ye shall live," from Christ's Apostle' (Alford).

Ver. 14. **For as many as**, etc. This introduces the reason why we 'shall live,' indicating again that the mortifying (ver. 13) is the work of the Holy Spirit,—**Led by the Spirit of God**; continuously and specially moved by the Spirit, in their whole life. 'The passive form expresses its complete dominion, without at the same time denying the voluntary *being led* on the part of the human will' (Lange).—**These are sons of God.** These and none other. In



are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.  
 15 For ye received not the spirit of bondage again unto  
 fear; but ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby  
 16 we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself beareth  
 witness with our spirit that we are children of God:

the Epistle to the Galatians there is a similar line of argument, but with more of a polemical purpose; yet even here there is an implied contrast with the Jewish notion that by birth they were entitled to this sonship.

Ver. 15. **For ye received not.** The fact that they are 'sons' is now proven from their Christian experience at conversion.—**The spirit of bondage**, etc. The latter part of the verse most naturally refers to the Holy Spirit, but many find a difficulty in this clause, if such a reference be accepted. But the difficulty is only apparent, as the following paraphrase shows: 'The Spirit ye received was *not* a spirit of bondage, but a spirit of adoption.' The Apostle does not suggest that the Holy Spirit could be a spirit of bondage, but emphatically denies this. This view is confirmed by the difficulties which attend the other explanation. To interpret: a slavish spirit, a filial spirit, is not only weak, but contrary to the New Testament use of the word 'spirit.' To refer it to the subjective spirit of the renewed man disturbs the antithesis.—**Again unto fear.** 'In order again to fear.' 'Again,' as in the native condition, when fear was the motive of religious life. This applies to Gentile, as well as Jewish Christians. All unchristian religiousness is in principle legalism, which is a bondage; and bondage produces fear.—**But ye received the spirit of adoption.** The repetition is for emphasis. Here also the reference is to the Holy Spirit, which they had received; this Spirit was not that of bondage to make them fear, but of adoption, leading to the joyful cry 'Abba, Father.' They were sons of God, not by birth, but by reason of grace numbering them among His children: the particular reference being to the method by which they became sons, rather than to their sonship.—**Whereby.** More exactly 'wherein;' in the fellowship of the Spirit by adoption, **we cry, Abba, Father.** 'Abba' is the Syrian name for 'Father,' to which Paul adds the equivalent Greek term. This repetition seems to have arisen from a liturgical formula, originating either among the Hellenistic Jews, who retained the consecrated word 'Abba,' or among the Jews of Palestine, after they became acquainted with the Greek language. The latter view best explains the use of it in Mark 14: 36; comp. Gal. 4: 6. Some add the notion of affectionate address in 'Abba'; others find a hint of the union of Jews and Gentiles in Christ.

Ver. 16. **The Spirit himself;** the Holy Spirit. The gender of 'Spirit' in Greek is neuter; see marg. rendering of Am. Com. in ver. 26, which should have been given here also, for the sake of consistency—**Beareth witness with,** or, 'to,' **our spirit,** our

17 and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified with *him*.

renewed spirit, in which the Holy Spirit dwells. But it is doubtful whether we should render 'with' or, 'to.' The former sense necessarily involves the latter (the converse is not true), and is somewhat preferable grammatically. This implies a two-fold witness: of the Holy Spirit, and also of our renewed spirit. If it be asked to whom is the witness borne? the answer is to the man himself, who needs both so long as he is here disturbed by doubt and sin. The clause is an important one, in warranting an assurance of salvation, and also in marking the distinction between the Holy Spirit and our spirit.—**That we are children of God.** This is what is testified, and for such assurance we may seek, however fanaticism has perverted the passage. 'That the world deny any such testimony in the hearts of believers, and that they look on it with scorn and treat it with derision, proves only that they are unacquainted with it; not that it is an illusion' (Stuart).

Ver. 17. **And if children, then.** Comp. the similar but fuller statement in Gal. 4: 7.—**Heirs of God.** The kingdom of glory is their inheritance. 'As He Himself will be all in all, so shall His children receive with Him, in His Son, everything for an inheritance; 1 Cor. 3: 21, etc.' (Lange).—**And joint-heirs with Christ.** The Roman law made all children (adopted ones included) equal heritors; but the Jewish law gave a double portion to the eldest son. Hence a discussion has arisen as to the exact reference in this clause. The Roman law would be naturally in the Apostle's mind when addressing Romans, and suits the context, where adopted sonship is the basis of inheritance. The other view emphasizes the mediation of Christ, through whom we inherit.—**If so be, etc.** This is the order, not the reason of obtaining full salvation (Calvin). There is a latent admonition in the conditional form: 'if so be.' On the sharing of these sufferings, comp. Col. 1: 24.—**That we may be also glorified with him.** This is God's purpose, not ours; in our case it is a result. 'He who would be Christ's brother and joint-heir, must bear in mind to be also a joint-martyr and joint-sufferer; not feeling Christ's sufferings and shame after Him, but with Him, as vers. 10, 32, 33, declare' (Luther). The sufferings are needed to prepare us for the glory. We suffered as He suffered, but He suffered for our sake, and we suffer for our own good; we are glorified as He is glorified, but He was glorified for His own sake, and we for His sake. His sufferings were penal, ours are purifying; His glory was His own, ours is a gift of grace.

## CHAPTER 8: 18-39.

*Grounds of Encouragement, attesting the Believer's Security.*

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present  
time are not worthy to be compared with the glory  
19 which shall be revealed to us-ward. For the earnest  
expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing

(2.) *Grounds of Encouragement, attesting the Believer's Security, vers.*  
18-39.

The life in the Spirit involves fellowship with Christ in suffering and glory (ver. 17). The sufferings are present, while the glory is yet future; but we are encouraged by the conviction that the glory will far outweigh the sufferings; the longing of the creation is an intimation that it will share in the full glorification which awaits us, and which we should wait for in patient hope (vers. 18-25). A further ground of encouragement is found in the sustaining presence of the Holy Spirit, interceding for us, and that too according to the will of the heart-searching God (vers. 26, 27). Finally 'we know that all things work together for good' to Christians, designated as those who love God, and, on the other hand, as the called according to His purpose (ver. 28). Their security rests upon His *plan* of salvation (vers. 29, 30), on His love as proved by the saving *facts* of the gospel (vers. 31-34), on the assurance that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ (vers. 35-37). An expression of the Apostle's personal confidence (vers. 38, 39) forms a striking, appropriate, and triumphant conclusion to one of the most precious passages in the word of God.

Ver. 18. **For.** This connects the verse with the whole thought culminating in ver. 17 (see above), and not with 'glorified' alone.—**I reckon.** No doubtful calculation is implied; comp. chap. 3: 28. Alford paraphrases: 'I myself am one who have embraced this course, being convinced that.'—**Not worthy to be compared with;** or, 'insignificant in comparison with.' 'Not worthy' is slightly objectionable as suggesting the idea of merit, which is foreign to the course of thought.—**The glory which shall be revealed.** At the end of 'the present time,' when full redemption comes with the coming of the Lord.—**To us-ward** (comp. Eph. 1: 19); in and upon us. Of this glory Christians are the subjects, the possessors, and the centre also, for vers. 19-23 represent the creation as sharing in it.

Ver. 19. **For the earnest expectation.** The idea is not of anxiety, but of a constant and persistent awaiting; the word translated 'earnest expectation' being derived from one which means 'to expect with uplifted head.' This verse confirms the thought of ver. 18, by indicating the greatness of the future glory which the creation awaits, probably its certainty also.—**Of the creation.** The main question respects the exact reference of the term, which must be the same throughout the passage. (The A. V. makes an unnecessary

variation by using both 'creature' and 'creation' to translate the same Greek word.) Undoubtedly the Apostle means the things created, not the act of creation, but how much is included?

EXPLANATIONS.—1. The *entire universe* without any limitation. But this does away with the contrast to 'sons of God,' and involves incorrect inferences. 2. *Inanimate creation*. This avoids some difficulties, but, by shutting out all intelligent creatures, deprives the passage of its most appropriate application.—3. *Humanity* alone, either as a whole, or with limitations. This seems too restricted. Further, if Christians are included, the contrast with 'sons of God' is done away; but if non-Christian humanity alone is meant, it is singular that Paul should choose the word 'creation' rather than the common term 'world.'—4. All creation *except* humanity. This limitation has much in its favor. (a.) Believers are evidently excluded; (b.) mankind as a whole do not have this expectation; (c.) man is not unwillingly subject to vanity (ver. 20); (d.) ver. 21 points to the fulfilment of the expectation (but see below, where it is taken as giving the purport of the hope). On the other hand, man is the head of creation, and it seems unnatural to exclude him; man is, on his physical side, part of the material creation, if that be referred to, it seems arbitrary to exclude him from it.—5. 'The material world surrounding man' (Tholuck). But this is open to the same objections as (2.) and (4.)—6. *The whole creation, rational as well as irrational, not yet redeemed, but needing and capable of redemption*, here opposed to the new creation in Christ and in the regenerate. The children of God appear, on the one side, as the first fruits of the new creation, and the remaining creatures, on the other, as consciously or unconsciously longing after the same redemption and renewal. This explanation seems to be the most correct one. It most satisfactorily accounts for the expressions: *expectation, waiting, groaning, not willingly* (ver. 20), and *the whole creation* (ver. 22). The whole creation, then, looks forward to redemption; all natural birth, to the new birth. As all that is created proceeded from God, so it all, consciously or unconsciously, strives after Him as its final end. What shows itself in nature as a dim impulse, in the natural man, among the heathen, and yet more among the Jews, under the influence of the law, comes to distinct consciousness and manifests itself in that loud cry after deliverance (chap. 8: 24), which Christ alone can satisfy; and then voices itself in happy gratitude for the actual redemption (Schaff in Lange, *Romans*). This view differs from (4) in including man in his fallen condition, as the head of the longing creation under the bondage of corruption. His material body shares in this corruption, and his unregenerate soul responds with an indefinite longing, yet too often uses its power over the body to stifle the inarticulate desire of the physical nature. In any case, the degradation of sin is fearfully manifest; the natural man is less alive to the 'hope' in which creation has been subjected (ver. 20) than nature itself.—**Waiteth, continues to wait.—The revealing of the sons of God.** The final revealing of Christ's glory is here

20 of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to  
 vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who  
 21 subjected it, <sup>1</sup>in hope that the creation itself also shall

<sup>1</sup>Or, *in hope; because the creation, &c.*

spoken of as that 'of the sons of God.' Thus the Apostle expresses his deep sense of the fellowship of believers with Christ. This revelation will show them as the sons of God, and in the glory then to be revealed (ver. 18) the creation will share.

Ver. 20. **For the creation was subjected**, *i. e.*, by God, in consequence of the fall of man (see close of the verse).—**To vanity.** It became empty, lost its original significance. This does not necessarily imply a change in matter corresponding to the fall of man, but that as a result of the fall the whole creation fell away from its original design; it is probable that thus its development was checked, and it became a prey to corruption (ver. 21).—**Not of its own will.** The subjection to vanity was, therefore, not a self-subjection, **but by reason of him who subjected it.** The reference is to God, not to Adam: (1.) the verb is passive, implying that the subjection was intentional, which could not be true of Adam: (2.) The will of God was the moving cause, but the expression: 'by reason of Him' (rather than 'through Him') reverently removes this supreme will of God to a wider distance from corruption and vanity (comp. Alford). Hence we object to the interpretation: the creature submitted itself to vanity, etc.—**In hope.** Resting on hope. This is to be joined with 'was subjected,' rather than with 'subjected it.' Another view makes the previous part of ver. 20 parenthetical, joining 'in hope' with ver. 19; this has much to recommend it, but can scarcely be insisted upon.

Ver. 21. **That the creation itself also.** This view of the connection seems preferable to that of the A. V., which, however, deserves the place given it in the margin of the R. V. (The Greek word means either 'that,' or 'because.')

We thus have the purport of the hope, what is hoped. The phrase 'the creation itself' is repeated in contrast with 'children of God. To attribute such a hope to the creation is in accordance with the thought of the entire passage.—**From the bondage of corruption.** The bondage which consists in corruption. The corruption results from the vanity to which the creation was subjected; it is borne 'not of its own will,' and hence is termed 'bondage.'—**Into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.** Not only delivered from bondage, but transferred into this freedom, which consists in, or at least results from, a share in the glory of the children of God. The word 'glory' is prominent and, hence the rendering 'glorious liberty' is unfortunate. The 'glory' is that spoken of in ver. 18, it will appear at the 'revealing of the sons of God' (ver. 19); in it the creation delivered from corruption will share. If the reference here were to the longings of heathen humanity alone, and not also to those of nature, Paul would have spoken more distinctly of the future conversion of the Gentiles.

be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the  
22 liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we

know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth  
23 in pain <sup>1</sup>together until now. And not only so, but

<sup>1</sup>Or, *with us*.

Ver. 22. **For we know.** Here, as in chaps. 2: 2; 3: 19; 7: 14, and vers. 26, 28, the Apostle appeals to the consciousness of *Christians*, rather than to the consciousness of all men. If ver. 21 be taken as the purport of the hope, then this is a proof of the existence of the hope, and not of 'the bondage of corruption.' 'For if that hope of glorious deliverance had not been left to it, *all* nature would not have united its groaning and travelling *until now*. This phenomenon, *so universal* and *so unbroken*, cannot be conducted without an aim; on the contrary, it presupposes as the motive of the painful travail that very hope, toward the final fulfilment of which it is directed' (Meyer).—**Groaneth.** The word 'together' qualifies this verb also. It refers to the common groaning of the whole creation, and the marginal rendering, 'together with us' suggests an idea which is first brought out in ver. 23.—**Travaileth in pain together.** The reference to birth-pangs suggests a new form of nature, to which this pain is the necessary preliminary.—**Until now, i. e.,** the present moment; the idea of unbroken duration is the prominent one. There is no reference to some point of time in the future

Ver. 23. **And not only so.** Not only is this true, that the whole creation, etc.—**But ourselves also.** There are a number of slight variations in the Greek, but in any case a repetition of 'ourselves' brings out the correct emphasis. The reference is to Christians, possibly to the Christians of that time (see below). Even Christians who are highly privileged unite with creation in its groaning.—**Which have, etc.** 'Though we have,' rather than, 'since we have.'—**The first-fruits of the Spirit.** 'First-fruits,' as a pledge of a full harvest. Explanations: (1.) The early Christians have the first-fruits of the Spirit; the full harvest will be the impartation of the Spirit to all Christians; (2.) what we now possess is but 'first-fruits' the harvest will be the full outpouring in the future; (3.) the first-fruits of our redemption consist in the possession of the Holy Spirit. The reference to full glorification at the close of the verse makes (2.) slightly preferable; (3.) is the least probable view.—**Even we ourselves groan within ourselves.** Though we have the first-fruits of the Spirit, our salvation is incomplete: the groaning is internal and intense.—**Waiting for our adoption.** 'Awaiting the fulness of our adoption' (Alford). We are already adopted children (vers. 14-17), but the outward condition corresponding to this new relation is not yet complete.—**The redemption of our body.** The redemption is not complete until the body is redeemed: then we shall have the full blessing of adoption. The explanation: 'redemption from our

ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for *our* adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.  
 24 For by\* hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: <sup>1</sup>for who <sup>2</sup>hopeth for that which he seeth?  
 25 But if we hope for that which we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for it.

\* For *by* read *in* (with marg. Or, *by*).—*Am. Com.*

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities read *awaiteth*.

body,' is altogether incorrect, for the whole current of thought in this chapter places emphasis upon the glorification of the body at the coming of Christ (comp. ver. 11). The mention of the body confirms the view of 'creation' which refers it to material existences also; for the groaning in ourselves respects that part of our being which is most akin to the material creation.

Ver. 24. **For by** (in, *Am. Com.*) **hope.** 'In' is greatly to be preferred, and 'for' is a more probable sense than 'by.' The fact of salvation placed us in a condition of which hope was a characteristic. Luther: 'We are indeed saved, yet in hope.' 'Inasmuch as the object of salvation is both relatively present and also relatively future, hope is produced from faith and indissolubly linked with it; for faith apprehends the object, in so far as it is present; hope, in so far as it is still future' (Philippi).—**Were we saved.** The tense points to the time of conversion.—**But hope that is seen,** etc. By these self-evident statements about 'hope,' the Apostle leads his readers up to the thought of ver. 25, which is both an encouragement and an exhortation.—**For who hopeth for that which he seeth?** There is much variety in the Greek manuscripts here. The R. V. accepts the briefest reading, supported by B (first hand) and one other authority. A longer reading (see margin) is accepted by Tischendorf, while the peculiar form, 'awaiteth,' is found in Aleph (first hand), A, and one other authority. The critical judgments indicated in the text and margin are those of Westcott and Hort.

Ver. 25. **With patience wait for it.** Literally, 'through,' but it here indicates a characteristic of the waiting. 'Patience,' as usual, suggests the notion of enduring constancy. Because the Christian hopes for a glory yet to be revealed (ver. 18), he awaits it perseveringly, which even the creation patiently expects; his patient endurance of the present sufferings has one strong motive in this hope.

Ver. 26. **And in like manner the Spirit also.** This is the second ground of encouragement. 'In like manner' introduces that which takes place at the same time, and in correspondence with what precedes: to our patient human waiting is added the help of the Divine Spirit. It is now generally conceded that the personal Holy Spirit is

26 And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself\* maketh intercession for us  
27 with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that

\* For *hims. If* read *itself.*—*Am. Com.*

referred to.—**Helpeth our infirmity**, or, ‘weakness.’ The best manuscripts give the noun in the singular number. The verb means ‘to lay hold of in connection with’; the Spirit helps our weakness, in bearing the burden spoken of in ver. 23, in awaiting final redemption. The reference is not to weakness in prayer alone, nor is our weakness the burden which the Spirit helps us bear.—**For** introduces an illustration of our weakness, showing how the Spirit helps us.—**We know not**, etc. This refers to our continued state of ignorance, not to special seasons.—**How to pray as we ought**. ‘It is not absolutely and altogether unknown to us what we ought to ask, but only what is necessary to ask according to the given circumstances.’ (Meyer).—**But the Spirit himself (itself)**. This phrase brings into prominence the Holy Spirit as the Intercessor, who knows ‘what we should pray for.’—**Maketh intercession for us**. The phrase answering to ‘for us’ is omitted, according to the best authorities, but the verb of itself implies this.—**With groanings which cannot be uttered**. The adjective here used may mean (1.) unutterable; (2.) unuttered; (3.) not speaking; the first sense is much to be preferred. Care should be taken not to weaken the expressions to the unutterable longings of the human spirit, nor on the other hand to refer it to the Holy Spirit independently of us. The Holy Spirit is here spoken of in His saving work in us: while dwelling in us He makes intercession thus, ‘Himself pleads in our prayers, raising us to higher and holier desires than we can express in words, which can only find utterance in sighings and aspirations’ (Alford).

Ver. 27. **But he that searcheth the hearts**. Though the groanings are unutterable, God understands their meaning. The Old Testament frequently by language of this kind (1 Sam. 16: 7; Ps. 7: 10, etc.), describes God as omniscient.—**The mind of the Spirit**. This is an object of knowledge to the heart-searching God, though it may be but partially recognized by us in our weakness.—**Because**, or, ‘that,’ etc. The word may have either sense; but the former seems more appropriate here. The latter makes the verse quite tame. Some explain: He *approves* what is the mind of the Spirit, because, etc. This is unnecessary. The ground of the perfect knowledge is the fact that He **maketh intercession** (or, ‘pleadeth,’ a slightly different word from that in ver. 26) **for the saints according to the will of God**, in harmony with the Divine will. Hence what we cannot utter, because we do not know what to pray for as we ought, what the indwelling Spirit in its pleadings cannot articulately utter through us, is known to God, because in accordance with His will. ‘In short, our



searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit,<sup>1</sup> because he maketh intercession for the saints  
 28 according to *the will of God*. And we know that to them that love God<sup>2</sup> all things work together for good, *even* to them that are called according to *his purpose*.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *that*.    <sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities read *God worketh all things with them for good*.

own yearnings, resulting as they do from the presence of the Spirit, are themselves a pledge of their own realization' (Beet).

Vers. 28-39. The *third* ground of encouragement; the Christian has nothing to fear, for nothing can separate him from the love of God (see analysis above). Weiss, however, finds here a triumphant conclusion of the whole passage (chaps. 6-8), which, by tracing the certainty of salvation to its deepest ground, the Divine foreordination, forms a transition to the next main division (chaps. 9-11).

Ver. 28. **And we know.** Comp. references under ver. 22. Here the context unmistakably indicates that this is an expression of Christian experience.—**To them that love God.** In emphatic position in the original. This distinguishes the class referred to; and is not in itself the main reason of their security. 'The love of believers for God is therefore not the ground of their confidence, but the sign and security that they were first loved of God' (Lange).—**All things.** All events, even afflictive ones (ver. 35), indeed all created things (vers. 38, 39). Some ancient manuscripts insert 'God' in this clause, giving the sense: 'God works all things together,' etc. But the insertion can readily be accounted for; it gives a correct explanation of what is here implied, and the word 'God' would naturally be taken from the context.—**Work together.** The usual sense: coöperate, combine to produce the result, is preferable. Others explain: 'contribute,' 'help,' work together with Christians.—**For good.** For their advantage, including their eternal welfare.—**Even to them that are called.** This is not equivalent to 'since they are called,' but gives a description of Christians from another point of view: 'as being those who are the called.' The context shows that the call has been accepted, and hence that this is not a general expression for hearing the invitations of the gospel.—**According to his purpose.** The call is in accordance with the purpose (comp. vers. 29, 30); the former becomes a fact we can perceive, the latter we cannot perceive, but receive as a fact, for all things cannot work together for good to them that love God, unless God has a purpose, with which what occurs accords. It should be remembered that to limit the efficacy of His purpose is to deny freedom to Him, in our anxiety to maintain our own freedom. If our hearts rest on HIM, in hope and trust and love, then we know that in order thus to rest, we must feel that He is infinitely free, strong, and right, as well as loving. The difficulty which arises in reconciling God's sovereignty and man's free will confronts us

29 For whom he foreknew, he also foreordained *to be conformed to the image of his Son*, that he might be

whenever we accept the existence of a Personal God, and is not peculiar to Christianity, much less to some one school of Christian theology.

Ver. 29. This verse and the next prove the statement of ver. 28, showing how the calling agrees with God's purpose, forming part of His plan; the successive steps of the unfolding of this purpose are indicated, up to the certain glorification of the chosen ones. The whole matter is stated as presenting the objective ground of confidence of believers. The other side is not touched upon, and no attempt is made to solve the great problem of reconciling the two. Those read aright here, who seek to learn for their comfort what God has done for them in eternity. *How* He did these successive acts is beyond our comprehension; *why* He did them can be answered in this world only by the responsive love of the believer's heart. But precisely because the Apostle is pressing the objective, divine side of our salvation, we should not depart from the obvious sense of his words in order to attempt to accommodate his language to that phase of the subject he is not discussing. 'It should be remembered that St. Paul is not now writing in the calm temper of philosophical analysis, but in an intense access of religious emotion, and therefore he does not stay to put in all the qualifying clauses that philosophy might require. It is well for mankind that he has done so. In all great and creative religious minds the consciousness of free will has retired into the background' (Sanday).—**Whom he foreknew, he also foreordained.** 'Predestinated' is quite accurate, but 'foreordained' preserves the correspondence with the previous verb which is found in the Greek. God knew beforehand certain individuals of our race, and those He destined beforehand, etc. The foreknowledge precedes the foreordaining, is its ground as it were (although strictly speaking, there is no *before* nor *after* to the eternal God). Hence we must not confound the two, nor apply them to other than the same individuals; nor should we depart from the obvious sense of 'foreknew' by explaining it as meaning 'approve' (introducing the idea of foreseen faith, as though this were the moving cause of God's foreordaining some to salvation). Such a thought is, moreover, entirely foreign in the context. Of course, the foreknowledge differs from God's 'pre-science of which all men and all events are the objects' (Hodge), but it does not of itself include the idea of selection, though closely connected with it here. The beginning of the whole plan is in the good pleasure of God: He foreknew certain persons as those whom He would destine unto salvation, and those he foreordained. That they would believe is also included in His plan. but it is precisely this subjective ground of salvation which the Apostle does not even name in this entire section.—**To be conformed to the image of his Son.** Some limit this to conformity to Christ in having a glorified body, but the whole context favors a wider reference to 'that entire form, of

30 the firstborn among many brethren: and whom he fore-ordained, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 What then shall we say to these things? If God

glorification in body and sanctification in spirit, of which Christ is the perfect pattern, and all His people shall be partakers' (Alford). Some include the present partaking in His sufferings and moral character. While this may be implied (for the thought of suffering is not remote, vers. 18, 31, etc.), it must not be made the main idea. Predestination is more than predestination to holiness through suffering; though attempts have been made to represent this as the only predestination that is defensible.—**That he might be.** The final purpose of the predestination, is concerning Christ; comp. Eph. 1: 4, 5.—

**The first-born among many brethren.** First, in order of time, as well as chief in rank; comp. Col. 1: 15. The purpose of grace began in Him, even as His glory is its end. Some place the emphasis upon 'first-born'; others upon 'many brethren'; but because the end of the foreknowledge and foreordaining is the glory of Christ in His people, equal emphasis rests on both: nothing can separate the first-born and His many brethren.

Ver. 30. **Them he also called.** This certainly means more than the general invitation to believe and accept the gospel, since the series of gracious acts here announced does not include all who are thus invited. The call is effectual, is inseparably linked with predestination and justification in the unfolding of God's gracious purpose. But the term is not identical with 'effectually called,' for the latter phrase emphasizes those subjective aspects which are left out of view here. The Apostle is not detailing our experience, but the acts of God which secure our salvation.—**Them he also justified.** Here, as elsewhere, accounted righteous. Only those who believe are justified, but as throughout the subjective side is not presented. The whole passage is for the comfort of those who believe.—**Them he also glorified.** Not 'them He also sanctified,' which we might have expected. This would turn our thoughts upon ourselves, disturbing the rhetorical climax quite as much as it weakened the sense of security in God's grace, which it is the Apostle's design to strengthen. Moreover, the past tense is chosen to present the matter as necessary and certain, so much so that it can be spoken of as already accomplished. While we may include here successive steps by which believers are led to their final and complete glorification, that end is the prominent thought, and the certainty of its accomplishment gives the triumphant tone to what follows.

Ver. 31. **What then shall we say?** In chaps. 3: 5; 4: 1; 7: 7; 9: 14, this form introduces an inference which the Apostle opposes; here and in chap. 9: 30, one he accepts.—**These things;**

32 *is* for us, who *is* against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he  
33 not also with him freely give us all things? Who

*i. e.*, set forth in vers. 29, 30. What we should say is to echo the language of the rest of the chapter, which presents in glowing language the certainty of salvation as based upon the acts of God's love in the facts of redemption.—If **God is for us, who is against us?** This rendering is more literal. That God is for us, has already been shown (vers. 29, 30); there is but one answer. But it is easier to accept the logic and admire the rhetoric of the passage, than to take the proper encouragement from it.

Ver. 32. **He that**, etc. This is an answer to the question of ver. 31; but as the great historical facts of the gospel now come into view, there is an advance in thought. The peculiar form of the original might be paraphrased: He who even, or, indeed.—**Spared not.** The negative side of what is positively stated in the next clause.—**His own Son.** This points to the only begotten Son (comp. ver. 3, where a similar expression occurs), to give emphasis to the display of love. Some find a contrast to adopted sons, but this is not necessarily involved.—**Delivered him up.** The entire humiliation may be included, but the special reference to death is obvious; comp. chap. 4: 25.—**For us all;** all believers, since this class is referred to throughout. On the phrase, comp. chap. 5: 6-8.—**How shall he not.** etc. An argument from the greater to the less; comp. chap. v. 9-10.—**Also with him.** 'Also' is probably to be joined with the verb, but in any case the fact that the gift of Christ to us, forms the basis of the conclusion.—**Freely give us all things.** Give as a matter of grace or favor, all those things already indicated in vers. 26-30, everything created that can work for good to us as those who are not the objects of the love of God in Christ. This is the middle term which binds the two sides presented in ver. 28: 'those who love God;' 'that are the called according to his purpose.'

Vers. 33-35. The main point open to discussion is respecting the punctuation of these verses. (1.) The A. V. gives answers as well as questions in vers. 33, 34. (2.) Others find two questions in each of these verses; so Augustine and many ancient and modern commentators. (3.) Meyer joins together the latter part of vers. 33, 34, with the first clause of vers. 34, 35 respectively: 'Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who shall condemn? Christ (Jesus) is He that died, etc., who also maketh intercession for us; who shall separate us from the love of Christ?' (4.) The R. V. accepts a somewhat modified form of Meyer's view in this text, and gives (2.) a place in the margin.

Ver. 33. **Who shall lay anything to the charge of.** The term used is a legal one, and suggests an accusation resulting in condemnation.—**God's elect.** Those referred to throughout, especially in vers. 28-30, thus designated to confirm the security of believers

34 shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? <sup>1</sup>It is God that justifieth; who is he that shall condemn? \*  
<sup>2</sup>It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who  
 35 also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Shall God that justifieth?*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *Shall Christ Jesus that died, . . . us?*

\* For *shall condemn* read *condemneth*.—*Am. Com.*

Only believers can with any propriety find comfort in the thought, and even they should be careful not to rest their faith upon a decree of election rather than the personal Saviour.—**It is God that justifieth**, or, 'God is the justifier.' If the common punctuation be accepted, this is the proof that no one can successfully accuse. If taken as a question, it is only a more rhetorical form of the same proof: 'Shall God who justifieth?' The R. V., however, makes it the basis of the statement of ver. 34: since it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?

Ver. 34. **Who is he that shall condemn (condemneth)?** The *Am. Com.* accept the more grammatical rendering.—**It is Christ Jesus.** The weight of evidence apparently favors the insertion of 'Jesus.' We may paraphrase: 'Christ Jesus is the one who died,' etc.—**Died**, etc. The four great saving facts about Christ Jesus are here mentioned in order: His death, resurrection, ascension, and continued intercession. The usual view presents these facts as a proof that Christ will not condemn us. (The interrogative form would be: Shall Christ Jesus who died, etc.) It is better to regard this verse as the basis of the question of ver. 35, proving that nothing can separate us from His love.—**Yea rather.** Not His death alone, but His death followed by His resurrection gives security.—**Was raised from the dead.** The latter phrase is well sustained, and there is about the same amount of evidence against inserting 'even' before 'at the right hand of God.'—**Maketh intercession**, or, 'pleadeth,' as in ver. 27. To the three great past facts is added one which is present and abiding. *Comp. Heb. 7: 25; 9: 24; 1 John 2: 1.* The fact is undoubted, and its pertinence in the Apostle's argument obvious, whatever view be taken of the connection.

Ver. 35. **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** (The marginal reading, found in the two oldest manuscripts, is probably due to the influence of ver. 39, since B. adds here: 'which is in Christ Jesus.') Christ's love to us, rather than our love to Him, or even our sense of His love to us. Still the separation must refer to possible hindrances in its gracious effects upon us; hence the separation would include a failure to feel His love to us. If we connect the question with ver. 34, we may paraphrase thus: 'Christ Jesus is the very one who died to atone for our sins; yes, more than this, He is the one who was raised from the dead for our justification (*chap. 4: 25*); it is He who sits at the place of power lovingly ruling the world

us from the love <sup>1</sup> of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, 36 or sword? Even as it is written,

For thy sake we are killed all the day long;

We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors  
38 through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that  
neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities,

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read of *God*.

for our sake; He it is who is pleading on our behalf; how then can any one, or anything, separate us from His love?' The questions which follow suggest what might seem to threaten such separation.—**Tribulation, or anguish**, as in chap. 2: 9; the former referring to outward trial, the latter to the inward sense of it. 'First of all believers are pressed into anxiety by the world. Then there comes **persecution** itself, which drives them out to **famine** and **nakedness**; the end is **peril**, the danger of **death**, and **sword**, death itself.' (Lange). There seems to some such climax. In those days these very things threatened; in our day the dangers are different, but none the less real and quite as often disturbing our sense of Christ's love to us.

Ver. 36. **Even as it is written**. From Ps. 44: 22, quite exactly in the words of the LXX. The whole Psalm refers to the sufferings of God's people, and the verse, even if not directly prophetic, is typical of the treatment the world bestows on God's children. The special point proven by the quotation is the danger of the 'sword,' since to this extremity persecution had gone in the case of the saints of old.—**We were accounted**, etc. Because thus reckoned as sheep destined for slaughter, they were killed all the day long.

Ver. 37. **Nay**; literally, 'but.' Some connect this with ver. 35, making ver. 36 parenthetical, but this is not necessary, for the course of thought is unbroken, and this verse is antithetical to both vers. 35, and 36.—**In all these things**; just mentioned.—**We are more than conquerors**. A single word in the Greek: 'over-conquer;' we are over-victorious. This tone of triumph is not selfish, for the abounding victory is **through him that loved us**. That the reference is to Christ, appears from the context ver. 35 (comp. ver. 39); from the tense used, which points to one crowning act of love (comp. chap. 5: 6; Gal. 2: 20), His death on the cross. Since His love conquered death; even in death we cannot be separated from His love, but are more than conquerors.

Ver. 38. **For I am persuaded**. In thus expressing his own triumphant conviction, the Apostle not only sums up what precedes, but goes further. The list here given exceeds the previous one; not only so, but to the great facts of God's purpose, and the gracious facts

nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor  
 39 height, nor depth, nor any other <sup>1</sup>creature, shall be  
 able to separate us from the love of God, which is in  
 Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *creation*.

of Christ's work, there is added the subjective side, the personal confidence of the Apostle himself.—**Neither death, nor life.** 'Death' is named first, probably because of the reference in ver. 36, and the natural antithesis is 'life.' Dying or living, we are the objects of this love. It is altogether incorrect to explain: 'neither anything dead nor anything living.'—**Nor angels, nor principalities.** This second pair refers to angelic beings; the latter term to a higher order. Comp. Eph. 1: 21; 6: 12; Col. 1: 16; 2: 15. The insertion at this point of the phrase 'nor powers,' which should be placed at the close of the verse, shows that the early transcribers so understood the passage. But it is difficult to determine whether we should understand good angels, or bad, or both. To refer the one term to the former, and the other to the latter, is both abrupt and arbitrary: to leave the evil spirits unnoticed in such a catalogue would seem strange. Hence, we may refer both terms to both classes, in the wide hypothesis the Apostle here conceives.—**Nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers.** Instead of continuing the arrangement by pairs, the Apostle now gives two sets in *threes*, 'in such a way, that to the two which stand contrasted, he adds a third of a general character' (Meyer). The first and second terms point to vicissitudes of time, the third to *earthly* powers of any kind. This seems to be the only sense of 'powers' that is in accordance with the position assigned it by the best authorities.

Ver. 39. **Nor height, nor depth.** The idea of space is now substituted for that of time; but it is difficult to define the exact reference. The most probable one is: heaven and hell; though heaven and earth, happiness and unhappiness, honor and shame, lofty and lowly, have been suggested. It is doubtful whether any specific definition is required.—**Nor any other creature.** Whatever created being has not been previously included, is included here. The phrase seems to sum up rather than merely to supplement what precedes.—**The love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.** This is not to be distinguished from 'the love of Christ' (ver. 35), since it is rather a fuller statement of the same love. 'God is the original fountain, Christ the constant organ and mediating channel of one and the same love; so that in Christ is the love of God, and the love of God is the love of God in Christ' (Meyer). Since God is above every created thing, since this love is ours, this completes the demonstration of the security of the believer. With this triumphant expression the Apostle closes his exposition of the main theme: the gospel is to every one that believeth the power of God unto salvation: this it could not be if

## CHAPTER 9: 1-5.

*Expression of Deep Sorrow for the Unbelief of the Jews.*

1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience anything could separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Erasmus: 'Cicero never said anything more eloquent.'

## CHAPTERS 9-11.

## IV. THE UNIVERSALITY OF THIS SALVATION, AND THE HISTORICAL ORDER OF ITS APPLICATION.

The gospel is God's power unto salvation, to the *Jew first*, and also to the *Gentile* (chap. 1: 16). The unbelief of the Jews seemed to invalidate the Apostle's statement respecting the universality of this salvation, and he therefore discusses the question which lay so close to his own heart. This of itself would account for these chapters; but it is also true that every one of his readers irrespective of any supposed conflict between Jewish and Gentile Christians, would be profoundly interested in the matter. Ever since, Christian people have been interested in it, both as belonging to the historical course of the development of the kingdom of God, and as one of the darkest mysteries of God's dealings with men. So long as the mass of the Jews reject the Lord Jesus as the Messiah, the mystery will remain unsolved, except as these chapters present a solution. It seems idle, therefore, to build up a baseless theory about the internal condition of the Roman congregation, to account for this portion of the Epistle (comp. Introduction).

On the other hand, this natural view of the passage helps the reader to avoid the false notion that the Apostle here treats of Divine sovereignty in an abstract manner: He writes, not in a cold, metaphysical tone, but with a pathos at times almost tragical (comp. chap. 9: 3): Luther, therefore, well says of these chapters as related to what precedes: 'Who hath not known passion, cross, and travail of death, cannot treat of knowledge (election of grace), without injury and inward enmity toward God. Wherefore take heed that thou drink not wine, while thou art yet a sucking babe. Each several doctrine hath its own season, and measure, and age.'

ANALYSIS: I. Chap. 9: 1-29: GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY: His promise is not void.

I. *Expression of deep sorrow* at the fact of the exclusion of so many of his people, God's covenant people, from salvation in Christ; chap. 9: 1-5.

II. *But this does not render God's promise void*; chap. 9: 6-29. For (a.) that promise was made of free grace, only to the chosen ones, as illustrated in the case of Isaac and Jacob (vers. 6-13); (b.) In this election God is not unjust, for He has a right to choose, being sovereign (vers. 14-29).

2. Chaps. 9: 30-10: 21: MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY: The Jews were excluded on the ground of *their own unbelief*.

I. The fact that the Jews rejected the way of faith: chap. 9: 30-33.

II. The proof that this was the one way of salvation; hence the unbelieving Jews themselves responsible; chap. 10: 1-21.



3. Chap. 11. THE PROSPECTIVE SOLUTION: But God has not cast off His people forever.

1. *The rejection of Israel is not total*; a remnant, elected of grace, will be saved (vers. 1-10).

11. *It is not final*; the unbelief and fall of Israel turns out for the salvation and reviving of the Gentiles, who, however, should not boast (vers. 11-24); since the rejection is only temporary, ultimately Israel will be saved (vers. 25-32).

In conclusion, the Apostle breaks forth into a doxology to the grace and wisdom of God, who will thus solve the enigma of the world's history, and lead all things to the glory of His name and the best interests of His kingdom (vers. 33-36).

## CHAPTER 9: 1-29.

### 1. GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY: HIS PROMISE IS NOT VOID.

I. *Deep Sorrow of the Apostle for the Unbelief of the Jews, his Brethren, and God's Covenant People, from whom the Messiah came, vers. 1-5.*

The pathos of the partially apologetic opening of this division of the Epistle is so great, that it has survived the interminable discussions which have been called forth by vers. 3 and 5. Probably he will interpret both passages most nearly aright who approaches them with the most vivid apprehension of the Apostle's feelings; it is 'a fervent outburst of Israelitish patriotism, the more sorrowful by contrast with the blessedness of the Christian previously extolled and so deeply experienced by the Apostle himself' (Meyer). The language is that of sorrowful sympathy, deprecatory in tone, 'to take at once the ground from those who might charge him in the conduct of his argument, with hostility to his own alienated people' (Alford).

Ver. 1. **I say the truth in Christ.** The asseveration of the Apostle is three-fold, and is introduced abruptly, without a conjunction, in accordance with the feeling which prompts it. 'In Christ' is not an adjuration (the form of an oath in Greek would be entirely different), but means, in fellowship with Christ, the element in which he lives. Such fellowship with Him who is the Truth implies the sincerity of one who enjoys it.—**I lie not.** This negative form of asseveration is a rhetorical strengthening of the previous expression.—**My conscience also bearing witness with me,** or, 'my conscience also bearing me witness.' The latter explanation is preferable: he does not lie, for his conscience, which would convict him of falsehood, gives testimony to him in accordance with what he is about to state. The other explanation points to a joint testimony; but his conscience and himself could not be joint witnesses to the Romans.—**In the Holy Ghost.** To be joined with 'bearing witness,' not with 'my conscience.' His conscience is, indeed, governed by the Holy Spirit; but in what he is about to say, he cannot lie, for the testimony his conscience bears is 'in the Holy Ghost.' Notice the symmetry: He speaks the truth, in fellowship with Christ; he does not lie, for his conscience bears testimony in the Holy Spirit.

- 2 bearing witness with me in the Holy Ghost, that I have great sorrow and unceasing pain in my heart.  
 3 For I could <sup>1</sup>wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according

<sup>1</sup> Or, *pray*.

Ver. 2. **Great sorrow and unceasing pain.** The cause of this <sup>\*</sup>grief obviously is the unbelief of his countrymen, their practical exclusion from the Messianic salvation. This feeling was respecting those who had for years persecuted him with relentless hatred, and who, shortly after this time occasioned him a long imprisonment, thus becoming the immediate cause of his martyrdom.

Ver. 3. **For I could wish that I myself**, etc. The order of the better established reading makes the word 'anathema' more emphatic, and forbids our taking 'I myself' as the subject of 'could wish,' which was grammatically possible with the order of the common reading. The Greek verb rendered 'could wish' is in the imperfect tense, and might mean 'was wishing;' but the same tense is constantly used of what is termed 'arrested action.' The latter sense is preferable here. (1.) The other view would seem to require 'I myself' as subject of 'was wishing.' (2.) The reference to the past makes an anti-climax, or at best a common-place sense: if the past wish were before his conversion, referring to his blind zeal for Israel against Christ, then the terms are strangely chosen to express that sense; to explain the wish as a past one, but occurring since his conversion, is open to all the objections that are urged against the common view, without having the same reasons in its favor. We therefore accept the obvious meaning: 'I could wish that I myself were devoted to destruction from Christ for the sake of my brethren,' etc. The implication is that the wish was not formed, either because it was impossible thus to wish, or, because the wish could not be fulfilled, or, both. The Apostle, however, is not using a hyperbole, nor is his language a senseless straining of the idea of self-denial. The objective impossibility did not destroy or diminish the subjective intensity of Paul's feeling, which thus seeks expression. This feeling, too, is most akin to the self-sacrificing love of the Lord he preached. Comp. the language of Moses (Ex. 32: 32). There is no wish to be separated from the holy will of Christ—which would be wicked—but only from the enjoyment of Christ, temporarily, as Christ Himself, on the cross, was separated from the enjoyment of His Father's presence, when He cried: 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?' And it detracts nothing from our estimate of his affection to know, as he did, that the very feeling he expresses was the result of Christ's love to him, and would be impossible were he sundered from fellowship with Christ. 'It is the expression of an affectionate and self-denying heart, willing to surrender all things—even, if it might be so, eternal glory itself—if thereby he could obtain for his beloved people

4 to the flesh: who are Israelites; whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving.

those blessings of the gospel which he now enjoyed, but from which they were excluded. Others express their love by professing themselves ready to give their life for their friends: he declares the intensity of his affection by reckoning even his spiritual life not too great a price, if it might purchase their salvation' (Alford). It is not implied that this is the constant and conscious state of every Christian, still less that our salvation depends upon our attaining to such a height of disinterested affection.—**Anathema.** This word, which occurs several times in the New Testament, as well as in the Septuagint, is the Hellenistic form of a word, originally meaning 'dedicated to God.' But as a rule, this form in the Bible denotes something dedicated to God in a bad sense. In the New Testament the word has the uniform sense of 'having become obnoxious to the wrath or curse of God.' Efforts have been made to prove that 'anathema,' in the time of Paul, meant only 'Jewish excommunication.' Others have explained it of banishment from church fellowship; some, of temporal death. But the idea of excommunication was first attached to this term in later times, and this sense is altogether inappropriate in the other New Testament passages where the word occurs, and to our mind unsatisfactory here also. The notion of 'temporal death' is entirely foreign to usage. These remarks hold good in regard to the corresponding verb, which is found several times in the New Testament. Wieseler, after a full investigation (see his *Galatians*, 1: 8; comp. Lange, *Romans*, pp. 302-304), says: '*Anathema*, in entire congruity with the Old Testament *cherem*, is used of a *person* who is dedicated to God, subjected to the *Divine curse* for his *death*, not, however, to bodily death, as in the more ancient formula (this reference, however, being not necessarily contained in the root, but resulting only from the historical relations of the Jews in ancient times), but to spiritual and eternal death.'—**From Christ.** Separated from Christ, from the fellowship with Him.—**For my brethren's sake.** Not, 'instead of,' which the preposition, of itself, does not mean, but for their benefit, just as the same term is used in Eph. 3: 13; Col. 1: 24 to indicate that Paul's sufferings might result advantageously for others.—**My kinsmen according to the flesh.** Notice the tender way in which the Apostle characterizes the Jews. But the phrase suggests as its antithesis 'brethren in the Lord.' Paul's patriotism grew out of the human consanguinity, but as the following description shows, has its deepest ground in the gracious gifts and religious privileges hitherto possessed by his countrymen. So too his sorrow for them had its basis in the fact that apart from Christ they were exposed to the wrath of God, and on the road to eternal death.

Ver. 4. **Who are.** The form of the original is almost equivalent to: 'seeing they are.'—**Israelites**, belonging to God's chosen people. In ver. 3 it is stated that they are Paul's people, but he loved them all

of the law, and the service of *God*, and the promises;  
5 whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as con-

the more because they were God's people, descendants of one whom God Himself had chosen and named. Since their advantages grew out of this relation, all the privileges named point toward the sovereignty of God, which comes into view in the subsequent discussion of the enigma presented by their rejection of Christ.—**Whose is the adoption.** Six privileges of the Jews are enumerated in the remainder of this verse: 'purely sacred, historical divine benefactions' (Meyer). The first is 'adoption,' not in the full New Testament sense (comp. vers. 6, 7), but in the theocratic sense pointing forward to the close union between God and men formed by Christ the only begotten, through the Holy Ghost.—**And the glory.** This refers to the visible Shekinah, which attended the people of Israel through the wilderness. Those who insist upon a chronological order, find a reference to earlier manifestations of Jehovah's presence, especially as 'the Angel of the Lord,' with which the later appearance is identified, however, in Ex. 14: 19.—**And the covenants.** The repeated covenants made with the patriarchs after the first covenant with Abraham, not the Old and New Testaments (covenants), nor the two tables of the law.—**And the giving of the law.** Not exactly the law itself, but the formal and distinctive act by which it became the possession of the Jews; a secondary reference to its substance may be implied.—**And the service of God, i. e.,** the Jewish (or, Mosaic) ritual service in the worship of God; in the tabernacle first, and then more fully established in the temple.—**And the promises.** This includes all the promises made to the chosen people, from the days of Abraham onward. This inclusive term prepares for the next clause.

Ver. 5. **Whose are the fathers.** Persons are now introduced: the whole line of patriarchs and prophets were types of Christ, who is next named, as the crowning glory and privilege of Paul's nation.—**Of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh.** The original is peculiar, suggesting a limitation, or, antithesis: as far as concerns the flesh, *i. e.,* His human nature, as in chap. 1: 3.—**Who is over all, etc.** The natural connection of this clause is with what precedes, especially since the last expression used suggests an antithesis. Accordingly, this has usually been referred to Christ, as defining what He is, *other than* 'according to the flesh.' As, however, our earliest manuscripts are without punctuation, some editors and commentators, prominent among whom are Tischendorf (8th ed.) and Meyer, separate this from what precedes, taking it as a doxology. This would require one of the following translations: 'He who is over all, God, *be* (or, *is*) blessed for ever, adopted by Reiche, Van Hengel, and others (Am. Com. marg.), or, 'He who is God over all (*be*) blessed for ever,' adopted by Meyer and others (R. V. marg. Eng. Com. first alternate rendering). Another, but the least defensible, view sets a period after 'over all,' including in the doxology only the words, 'God *be* blessed forever.'

cerning the flesh, <sup>1</sup>who is over all, God blessed <sup>2</sup>for ever.\* Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Some modern interpreters place a full stop after *flesh*, and translate, *He who is God over all be (is) blessed for ever*: or, *He who is over all is God, blessed for ever*. Others punctuate, *flesh, who is over all. God be (is) blessed for ever*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *unto the ages*.

\* For marg. <sup>1</sup> read Or, *flesh: he who is over all, God, be blessed for ever*.—*Am. Com.*

So Eng marg., last alternate rendering. Any one of these explanations is possible, and would be preferable to the usual one, if it were proven that the word 'God,' standing without the article, as here, is never applied to Christ in the New Testament. But Meyer not only admits that John thus applies it, but that Paul also might have done so, 'by virtue of his essential agreement in substance with the Christology of John' (Meyer, *Romans*, ii. 118). The objection he raises is that Paul has never done so. After renewed investigation of the subject, we feel constrained to say that this is the only objection that is even plausible, and that it is clearly outweighed by the many considerations to be presented in favor of the usual punctuation. (1.) We say 'usual punctuation,' for in all the authorities which can give evidence on a matter of punctuation (manuscripts, versions, and fathers), the unanimity is very remarkable. All the early writers accepted this view with the single exception of Diodorus of Tarsus. (2.) It must be admitted that the fulfilment of God's promises in the coming of Christ might evoke a doxology to God at this point of the Apostle's discourse. (Comp. Beet *in loco*, and the exhaustive discussion of Prof. Ezra Abbot, *Journal of Soc. Bib. Exegesis*, 1881.) 'Intended doxologies, caused by a sudden access of pious feeling, are not uncommon in the writings of St. Paul, but they are either worked into the regular order of the sentence, as in chap. 1: 25; Gal. 7: 5, or else they are formally introduced, as in 2 Cor. 11: 31; 1 Tim. 1: 17' (Sanday). Those who hold that Paul held the same view of our Lord's Person as that expressed by John, will regard the context as decidedly in favor of the reference to Christ. (3.) Furthermore, in all such doxologies, as the other view would make of this, the word 'Blessed' stands first. (4.) The words 'who is' would be unnecessary if this were a doxology. (5.) As regards the objection drawn from Paul's usage, we may not only cite such passages as Col. 1: 15, etc., but argue that for this Apostle *not* to have added something in regard to the Divine nature of Christ would be far more unlike him than for him to have once expressed himself in terms which agree, not only with the expressions of John, but also with his own statements. Even if the clause be taken as a doxology, the Divinity of Christ is not thereby proven unscriptural; while on the other hand, if the usual view be correct, there is no room for a denial of that doctrine. Paul could not have been ignorant of the great question of the Master, which soon became the question of the Church, 'What think ye of Christ? whose Son is he?' (Matt. 22: 42.) Is it likely that he could so express himself as to mislead the vast majority

## CHAPTER 9 : 6-29.

*God's promise is not Void.*

6 But *it is* not as though the word of God hath come to nought. For they are not all Israel, which are of

of Christians on that point? 'It therefore does not seem to us at all doubtful, that Paul here indicates, as the crown of all the prerogatives accorded to Israel, that of having produced for the world the Christ, who now, exalted above all things, is God blessed for ever' (Godet).

As regards details: 'over all' seems to refer to all things, not to the exclusion of persons (comp. Eph. 1: 21-23, and similar passages).

'Who is' points to the present exalted condition of the Incarnate Lord.

—**God.** The words 'over all' should not be joined with this, as is done by many of those who could find here a doxology to God the Father Almighty. Such an idea would have been expressed in another form from that here used.—**Blessed for ever.**

'The expression "Blessed for ever" is twice besides used by St. Paul, and each time unquestionably not in an ascription of praise, but in an assertion regarding the subject of the sentence. The places are, chap. 1: 25, and 2 Cor. 11: 31: whereas he uses the phrase "Blessed be God" as an ascription of praise without joining "for ever"' (Alford).—

**Amen.** This conclusion is appropriate in either view of the passage. For if this is indeed the only place where Paul directly calls Christ 'God,' the mention of this coming privilege of Israel might well be regarded as an act of worship, to which he devoutly adds: Amen.

II. *God's Promise is not Void*, vers. 6-29.

(It is necessary here, as in a few other instances, to divide a paragraph of the R. V.)

The rejection of the gospel by the Jews, which has caused the deep emotion of the Apostle in view of their great privileges (vers. 1-5), does not render God's promise void. This position the Apostle proves: (a) By showing that this promise was made of free grace, only to those who were individually chosen (vers. 6-13). Two Old Testament illustrations are cited: the case of Isaac (vers. 7-9), and that of Jacob (vers. 10-13). (b) But this assertion of God's freedom may give rise to the false inference that God is unrighteous in thus choosing (ver. 14). But this very objection involves an admission of the fact of God's sovereignty (implying that His promise is not void), which the Apostle affirms, citing the case of Pharaoh (vers. 15-18). Another objection is then raised: if God is sovereign, why doth He find fault (ver. 19). This objection the Apostle answers by reasserting God's sovereignty (vers. 20, 21), but suggesting that even in the exercise of this, His right, long-suffering and mercy are displayed (vers. 22, 23), especially the latter to both Jews and Gentiles (ver. 24), in accordance with various Old Testament predictions (vers. 25-29).

As regards the free, unconditioned grace of God, this must be deemed the fundamental fact in the discussion. We may further assume that Paul holds this in such a way as to exclude every theory which makes God the author of sin. In other words, the Apostle, in accordance with the teachings of the Scriptures as a whole, presents,

on the one hand, the absolute causality and unconditioned grace of God; and, on the other, the moral nature of man, including also that relative freedom which involves human responsibility (human personality). To reconcile these two truths is the problem which confronts every one who believes in a personal God and is conscious of his own responsibility. Thus far the Christian life has proved the only practical solution, while Christian theology has been busied with the necessary task of attempting a theoretical solution. Probably such a solution will be reached, only when the full victory over evil has been achieved. We add the following remarks (comp. Schaff, in Lange, *Romans*):

(1.) The Scriptures teach an eternal predestination of believers unto holiness and blessedness, and hence they must ascribe all the glory of their redemption, from beginning to end, to the unmerited grace of God alone.

(2.) But it is as plainly asserted or assumed that believers do not, on this account, cease to be free agents, responsible for all their doings. As God works in nature, not magically and immediately, but through natural laws, so He works in men, through their wills, hence through the mediation of finite causes; the more His grace is developed within them, so much the more is their true freedom developed; the result being the coincidence of perfect holiness and perfect freedom. For the highest freedom is the complete triumph over the evil, and is consequently identical with the moral necessity of the good. In this sense, God is free, precisely because He is holy.

(3.) It is nowhere asserted that God has foreordained sin *as sin*, although He has foreseen it from all eternity, and with respect to redemption, permitted it, while constantly overruling it to His purposes. Hence those who are lost are lost through their own fault, and must blame their own unbelief, which rejects the means of salvation proffered them by God (comp. chap. 9: 30-33).

(4.) In the *time* of the calling of nations and individuals to salvation, God proceeds according to a plan of eternal wisdom and love, which we cannot fathom here, but should reverently adore.

(5.) The doctrine of election is designed and adapted to humble sinners, and to comfort believers, while it increases their gratitude and happiness. Only a culpable misapprehension and misuse of it can lead either to a careless security or to despair. But because the depths of the divine decrees cannot be fathomed, the Christian may well accept the doctrine, not to puzzle himself with attempts to solve the mystery, but to gain new encouragement to make his own calling and election sure, and with fear and trembling to work out his own salvation.

**Ver. 6. But it is not as though.** The Apostle returns to the fact that the Jews rejected the gospel, and proceeds to account for it by stating that the promise holds good only for the true Israelites; a result indicated in the Scriptures. The opening clause, which is quite peculiar, means: 'What I am saying is not of such a kind as to mean that,' or, 'the matter is not of such a kind that.' The former sense would imply the latter. Whatever he says, he does not mean that **the word of God hath come to nought**. The promise of God, as given in the Old Testament, has not 'fallen to the ground,' notwithstanding the unbelief of the Jews.—**For they are not all Israel** (constitute the true Israel of God), **which are of Israel, i. e., Israelites by birth.** The exact form of the original cannot be reproduced,

7 Israel : neither, because they are Abraham's seed, are they all children : but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.  
 8 That is, it is not the children of the flesh that are children of God ; but the children of the promise are

but the meaning is unmistakable. The Apostle here presents the negative side of the idea already advanced in this Epistle (chap. 4 : 12) and in Gal. 3 : 9, that physical relationship does not constitute membership in the true Israel.

Ver. 7. **Neither** ; 'and also not,' extending the same thought to physical relationship with Abraham, the father of the faithful.—**Because they** ; either, 'all those of Abraham,' or, referring to the subject in ver. 6 : 'they which are of Israel.' The former suits the immediate context (Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau), but the latter is grammatically more exact.—**The seed of Abraham.** A well-known phrase, here meaning, as the context shows, 'the physical posterity of Abraham'; in Gal. 3 : 20, the phrase is used of his true spiritual descendants.—**All children** ; in the true, spiritual sense, inheritors of the promise made to him.—**But** ; on the contrary, the Scripture itself shows that this was the design.—**In Isaac shall thy seed be called.** Spoken to Abraham (Gen. 21 : 12), at the time when Hagar and Ishmael were sent away. Explanations : 1. *In* the person of Isaac shall thy seed be named. 2. *Through* Isaac shall the race be born which shall be truly and properly called thy seed. Both are true in fact, but as the Apostle is choosing historical illustrations, it seems better to accept (1.) which refers to the historical person. 'Called' is here = 'named,' not, 'called into being,' or, 'chosen.' 'Paul finds in this divine declaration the idea enunciated (ver. 8,) that not on bodily descent (which was also the case with Ishmael), but on divine promise (which was the case with Isaac, ver. 9), the true sonship of Abraham is founded' (Meyer).

Ver. 8. **That is** ; the Old Testament saying amounts to this.—**It is not the children of the flesh that are children of God.** Not those who must be regarded merely as the fruit of physical generation, as was the case with Ishmael (comp. Gal. 4 : 23).—**But the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed.** The reference is directly to the birth of Isaac (ver. 9), but also to his true descendants, who 'are reckoned' such in virtue of the promise. The birth of Isaac was not only according to the promise, but God intervened through the promise, which Abraham believed, and thus by his faith in the promise obtained the power that rendered him capable of becoming the father of this son (comp. chap. 4 : 16-21). 'In virtue of this superior element, Isaac and his descendants alone could be regarded as "children of God." It is this which explains the second proposition of the verse, where the title of (promised) posterity is expressly given to that descent obtained through faith in the promise. The first proposition of the verse by implication justifies the rejection of carnal Jews ; the second, the adoption of believing Gentiles' (Godet).



9 reckoned for a seed. For this is a word of promise,  
 According to this season will I come, and Sarah shall  
 10 have a son. And not only so; but Rebecca also hav-  
 11 ing conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac—for *the*  
*children* being not yet born, neither having done any-  
 thing good or bad, that the purpose of God according  
 to election might stand, not of works, but of him that

Ver. 9. **For this is a word of promise**, or, 'of promise is this word.' That 'the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed' is proven, for the word, in accordance with which the birth of Isaac took place, this passage now cited, is a word of promise. Not 'was,' for the reference is to an existent passage of Scripture.)—**According to this season.** The passage is freely quoted from the LXX (Gen. 18: 10, 14). The Hebrew phrase rendered: 'according to this season,' means 'when the time (shall be) reviving,' *i. e.*, at this season of the next year: so the LXX. substantially.—**And Sarah shall have a son.** From Gen. 18: 14, substituted for a similar clause in ver. 10, because of the emphasis it gives (in the original) to the word 'Sarah,' who is the principal person (comp. Gal. 4: 22, etc.).

Ver. 10. **And not only so**, or, 'this.' These words introduce a second proof from history, namely, the case of Rebecca and her two sons, one of whom was chosen. 'This,' is slightly preferable to 'so,' because this case is not strictly of the same kind as that of Sarah, but furnishes a stronger proof.—**But Rebecca also.** Some explain: not only Sarah, but Rebecca also, had a divine promise, was treated in the same manner. Others find a broken construction, 'Rebecca' being re-introduced in ver. 12: 'unto her.' Accepting the latter view, we place a dash at the end of this verse. In any case 'also' points to the previous case of Sarah.—**Having conceived by one, even by our father Isaac.** In the previous instance the two children were of two mothers; here the children were twins, having the same father and mother, and yet of such a different destiny. 'Our father Isaac;' recalling the quotation in ver. 7.

Ver. 11. The R. V. properly places a dash at the end of ver. 10.—**For the children**, etc. The form of the Greek is peculiar; the R. V. supplies 'the children,' to relieve the difficulty of the construction.—**Good or bad.** The latter word represents a different reading from that followed in the A. V. The term has a wider range of meaning than 'evil,' though here it means immoral. This clause incidentally opposes the doctrine of the preëxistence of souls, and a previous fall.—**That the purpose of God according to election.** This clause indicates the purpose of what was said to Rebecca, and is put first for emphasis. The phrase, 'according to election,' is closely joined with 'purpose;' 'the purpose which was so formed, that in it an election was made' (Meyer). Both are 'before the foundation of

12 calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the 13 younger. Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.

the world' (Eph. 1: 4; 3: 11). The whole expression involves God's freedom in His choice of individuals as an essential part of His purpose of redemption. Whether we can reconcile this with our consciousness of freedom, or not, it is here asserted to be a fact.—**Might stand**, unchangeable, instead of 'coming to nought' (ver. 6); and this, not simply in man's estimate, but in reality. 'It is not only in the thought of man, it is *really* that the liberty of God would be compromised, if any human merit regulated His choice' (Godet).—**Not of works, but of him that calleth**. This is joined by some with 'purpose,' by others with 'abide,' but is most correctly taken by others, as a definition of the whole preceding clause: and this design, that his purpose according to election might abide, was not effected by reason of works, did not depend on works, but on God Himself who calls. Whatever view be taken of the connection, the ultimate ground of our salvation is in God Himself. 'God does not choose us *because* we believe, but *that* we may believe' (Augustine). Our salvation is not *on account* of faith, but *through* faith.

Ver. 12. **It was said unto her**. Gen. 25: 23; here cited, quite closely, from the LXX.—**The elder shall serve the younger**; lit., 'the greater shall serve the less.' As spoken to Rebecca, this language referred not only to the twin children, but to the nations springing from them respectively (Gen. 25: 23: 'two nations are in thy womb'). Hence it seems best to accept here both the national and the personal reference. The former is required by the citation from Malachi (see ver. 13), but the latter is necessary to give point to the argument of the Apostle. As respects the nations, the prophecy was fulfilled in the days of David, who conquered the Edomites (2 Sam. 8: 14), but how unlikely that Paul would, in this connection, separate the nations from their respective ancestors, especially when the prophecy became a fact in the history of the two brothers themselves; comp. Gen. 27: 29, 37, 40. Eternal results in the case of these persons are not involved in the original prophecy; and doubtless theocratic privileges and promises are more prominently in the mind of the Apostle in these historical cases.

Ver. 13. **As it is written** (Mal. 1: 2, 3), **Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated**. In the original prophecy the statement that Esau was hated, is proved by the added words: 'and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.' The reference to the nation of Edomites is therefore clear. 'As it is written,' however, implies a correspondence with ver. 12. We therefore, apply the language to Jacob and Esau personally, regarding the national destiny as bound up in the personal position of the two ancestors. The word 'hated' seems harsh, and hence some explain it as 'love less,' making the whole passage to mean, 'I preferred Jacob to Esau.'

14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness

But, despite such instances as Luke 14: 24, compared with Matt. 10: 37, this explanation is not allowable. The historical dealings of God with Esau (and with Edom also), indicate, not less love, but the deprivation or absence of love, to say the least. 'God loves the good, because He produces the very good that is in them; and He elects them not *on account* of their faith and their holiness, but *to* faith and holiness. But it cannot be said, on the other hand, that He hates the evil men because He produces the very evil that is in them; for that would be absurd, and destroy His holiness; but He hates them on account of the evil that they do or will do in opposition to His will. While human goodness is the *effect* of Divine love and grace, on the contrary, human wickedness is the *cause* of Divine hatred and abhorrence; and on that account alone can it be the object of the punitive wrath, and condemnatory decree of God.' (Schaff, in Lange, *Romans*, p. 328.) This is implied in the subsequent discussion, where the ill desert of all men is assumed, and salvation in the case of any presented as caused by God's mercy. But whatever be the extent of the preference, or the result of the choice in the case of Jacob and Esau, the main thought is: God does exercise a prerogative of election, independently of the human considerations referred to in these instances. That this is Paul's meaning is evident from what immediately follows. His assertion of the freedom of God might be used to impeach His moral character. If the Apostle's argument thus far had not plainly set forth that freedom, the objection of ver. 14 could not have been raised.

Ver. 14. **What shall we say then?** This question introduces an objection, as in chaps. 3: 5; 6: 1; 7: 7, which is then stated in the form of another question. The usual indignant denial follows, and then the detailed answer (vers. 15-18). In ver. 19, etc., a further objection (growing out of the answer to this one) is raised and answered. The question is not put in the mouth of an objector, still less is it represented as the language of an unbelieving Jew. The connection of thought is natural: may it not be said that the exercise of this free choice on the part of God, as already illustrated, involves the unrighteousness in Him? Let it never be! He only is unrighteous who is under obligations which he does not fulfil; but God is under no obligations to His creatures who have become sinful, *i. e.*, opposed to Him. The blessings they receive of Him are not their right, but of His mercy, as the words of God Himself in the Old Testament plainly show. The underlying principle already assumed in this Epistle, is that God's will is the absolute and eternal norm of righteousness, and all that He does is necessarily right see (references). If there were any superior norm of righteousness to which this personal God is subject, then He would cease to be God.—**Is there unrighteousness with God?** In making this choice of individuals. The objection ends here.—**God forbid.** See chap. 3:

15 with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I  
 will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will  
 16 have compassion on whom I have compassion. So  
 then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that  
 17 runneth, but of God that hath mercy. For the scrip-

4, etc. Some of the fathers took vers. 15-18 as a renewal of the objection, but the close connection, with 'for' and 'so then,' as well as the Scripture citations, show that those verses give the reason for this indignant denial.

Ver. 15. **For he saith to Moses.** An exact quotation from the LXX. (Exod. 33: 19), giving part of Jehovah's answer to Moses, when on Mount Sinai, he said: 'I beseech thee, show me thy glory.' 'In condescending to grant this request, the Lord would have him understand that nothing in him, notwithstanding all he had been able to do for the service of God, would merit such a favor. If God accorded it to him it was not because it was Moses who besought Him, or had any right to it, it was pure grace on His part' (Godet).—**On whom I have mercy.** The present tense is used in this and the corresponding clause ('I have compassion'), referring to the settled disposition of mercy and compassion. The word 'whom' in both instances might be rendered 'whomsoever,' and has an emphasis here, describing not merely the mercy, but the choice of the individual objects as the free act of God.—**Have compassion** is stronger than 'have mercy;' it ordinarily includes outward manifestations of compassion. The future tenses ('will have mercy,' 'will have compassion') point to the active exercise of God's mercy and compassion.

Ver. 16. **So then.** With this favorite expression, Paul introduces an inference from the passage cited: 'In consequence of all this, it is proven that.' The word to Moses is accepted as a divine axiom, and the inference is to be regarded as of universal validity, since neither the preceding context nor the scope of the argument suggests any limitation. 'It is in parts of Scripture like this that we must be especially careful *not to fall short of what is written*—not to allow of any compromise of the plain and awful words of God's Spirit, for the sake of a caution which He Himself does not teach us' (Alford).—**It is not of him that willeth,** etc. The participation in any and all of the effects of God's mercy and compassion, does not depend on human will, nor on human effort, but on the will of God, who thus spoke to Moses. The reference of 'him that willeth' to Abraham's wish respecting Ishmael, and of 'him that runneth' to Esau's running home from hunting, is worth mentioning as a specimen of far-fetched interpretation.

Ver. 17. **For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh.** What the Scripture says is here regarded as equivalent to what God says; comp. Gal. 3: 8, 22. The choice of an illustration outside the Jewish nation

ture saith unto Pharaoh, For this very purpose did I raise thee up that I might shew in thee my power, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth. So then he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth.

confirms the view that Paul is here concerned with principles of universal application. The case of Pharaoh presents the antithesis to God's showing mercy.—**For this very purpose did I raise thee up.** Freely quoted from the LXX. (Exod. 9: 16). Moses was commanded to say this to Pharaoh, after the sixth plague had fallen on Egypt. The main question is respecting the meaning of 'did I raise thee up,' which is an exact translation of Paul's language. But the Hebrew means literally: 'have caused thee to stand,' and this the LXX. weakens into 'thou wert preserved. Explanations: (1.) 'Allowed thee to appear,' thy whole historical appearance has been brought about by me, in order that, etc. This is the view of the majority of our best modern commentators. It is neither fatalistic, nor does it improperly weaken the strong language of the Apostle. Since God numbers the hairs of our head, He superintended the exodus of His people, and in this as a matter of history, the principal human factor was Pharaoh. He did not cause the evil, but bent and guided it for His own glory. (2.) 'Preserved thee alive.' This agrees with the LXX. But Paul has, apparently with purpose, deviated from that translation. Moreover, this view fails to give sufficient strength to this link in the chain of the Apostle's reasoning. (3.) 'Excited thee to opposition.' But this does not agree either with the original Hebrew, or with the LXX. Nor does the context sustain it, since the reference to hardening in ver. 18 is based upon this verse as a whole, not on the sense of this phrase. (4.) 'Created thee,' as a hardened sinner. This is a fatalistic view, alike uncalled for by the words of the argument. The first view is, therefore, decidedly preferable.—**That I might shew in thee my power.** This purpose was accomplished in the case of Pharaoh by means of the supernatural events accompanying the deliverance of the Israelites, which were called forth by the opposition of Pharaoh.—**My name might be published abroad,** etc. Further purpose. Comp. the song of Moses, after the destruction of Pharaoh's army (Exod. 15: 1-19, especially where he refers to the effect produced on other nations by these events.—**In all the earth.** 'A result which in the later course of history, was especially fulfilled in the dispersion of the Jews and the spread of Christianity, and continues to be fulfilled' (Meyer). Comp. the many allusions in the Psalms to these events as fulfilling these purposes.

Ver. 18. **So then** (as in ver. 16: the A. V. varies unnecessarily), summing up the whole matter, after considering both sides.—**He hath mercy on whom he will.** Here the emphasis rests on 'will;' not, as in ver. 15, on 'whom.'—**Whom he will he hard-**

19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he still find  
20 fault? For who withstandeth his will? Nay but,  
O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall  
the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why didst

**eneth.** Here, as throughout, the freedom of God is the main thought; the holiness, love, and wisdom of His will are implied. Hence we say, this freedom is not arbitrary, but more because of what God is, than from our ability to explain *how* it is so. As respects the word 'hard-eneth,' it assumes, as does the whole discussion, the presence of sin in the individual, without referring to its origin. It here suggests such a fortification in sin, that the sinner is unsusceptible of all workings of grace and better influences, the removal into a state where conversion is either absolutely impossible, or rendered difficult in the highest degree. This may be termed an act of God, in so far as He has ordained the laws of the development of evil, 'that, propagating still, it brings forth evil' (Schiller). The objection which follows (ver. 19) shows that the Apostle regards this hardening of Pharaoh as penal, and hence as to some extent effected by God. The personal tone of the answer (ver. 20) indicates further that the principle is of universal application.

Ver. 19. **Thou wilt say then unto me.** This verse states a further objection, growing out ('then') of what has already been said. It is not necessary even here, where the answer is so sharply personal, to regard the objection as uttered by a Jew. For it will arise, wherever there is any such notion of God, however derived, as admits the possibility of His being the author of evil in man, or what amounts to the same thing, denies His righteousness, because there is a theoretical difficulty in reconciling our responsibility with His free will. The difficulty is an ontological one: Given an infinite free will, how can there be other free wills?—**Why doth he still find fault?** Some good authorities insert 'then,' here also, referring to the previous discussion. 'Still,' this being the case, that whom He will He hardens (ver. 18).—**For who withstandeth his will?** The last word is peculiar, meaning 'the thing willed,' but implying deliberation. The R. V. properly restores the present tense. The question implies the helplessness of the objector, and acknowledges the Almightyness of God, but at the expense of His rectitude, since it virtually makes Him responsible for men's sins.

Ver. 20. **Nay but.** An unusual word, meaning, 'Yes indeed;' here used, either with a slight tone of irony, or, more probably, of indignant rebuke. 'I do not examine the intrinsic verity of what you allege; but, be that as it may, this much is certain, that you are not in a position to dispute with God' (Godet).—**O man.** This address suggests the contrast between man and God, afterwards brought out more fully.—**Who art thou.** 'How great art thou?—**That repliest against God.** The peculiar word here used suggests an answer given to a previous response, *i. e.*, to God's response (finding fault, ver. 19)

21 thou make me thus? Or hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?

to man's sin.—**Shall the thing formed, etc.** We have here an echo of Isa. 24; 16 (not a quotation.) 'The thing formed,' as a vessel is moulded. Hence the question has no reference to original creation, but to subsequent ethical moulding. The nature of the 'clay' and 'lump' is not yet suggested. The original indicates that a negative answer is expected.—**Why didst thou make me thus?** The word 'make,' in accordance with what precedes, is to be referred to preparing, adjusting, etc., not to creating. The folly, rather than the error of the objector, is thus rebuked.

Ver. 21. **O: hath not the potter.** 'Or' suggests the dilemma arising out of the figure: Either the thing formed cannot speak thus, or, the potter has not authority, etc. The interrogative form here implies an affirmative answer: 'The potter has authority,' etc. The figure of a potter is found in the Old Testament prophecies, and here undoubtedly represents God Himself.—**A right;** 'authority,' 'privilege,' not, 'power' in the sense of 'force'.—**Over the clay.** The 'clay' represents the human subjects under discussion; the article suggests that it is the potter's clay.—**From the same lump to make, etc.** The whole clause explains what is meant by the 'authority' of the potter, while the figure itself excludes the idea of creation. 'The lump' and 'the clay' refer to the same thing; the latter is the substance itself, the former presents it as already in use by the potter for his purposes. To limit the 'lump' to the Jews is narrow, and opposed by vers. 22, 24, etc. Meyer explains: '*The same lump* denotes human nature in and of itself, as with its opposite moral capabilities and dispositions it is equally in all, but not yet conceived of in its definite individual moral stamp.' Similarly Godet: 'The mass represents *entire humanity*, not that humanity which God created, but in that state in which He finds it at each moment when He makes it serve His reign.' The supralapsarian explanation, referring it to the created man, seems contrary to the figure and to revealed facts. The view taken of the moral status of the 'lump,' representing humanity, will depend largely upon the interpretation of chap. 5: 12-21. The denial of original sin makes the difficulty here all the greater.—**One part of a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour.** This rendering is more exact than that of the A. V. The potter makes from the same lump, a part into a vessel designed for honorable uses, and another is for dishonorable uses. The emphasis in the original seems to rest on the words 'unto honor,' just as below (ver. 23) the corresponding phrase, 'vessels of mercy,' is made prominent. It should be observed that the whole verse is designed to assert God's freedom, under the figure of the potter; hence the failure of all attempts to limit the application to the Jews, or to temporal distinctions,

22 What if God, willing \* to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering

\*Add marg. Or, *although willing*.—*Am. Com.*

‘The honor and dishonor are not here the *moral purity* or *impurity* of the human vessels, but their *ultimate glorification* or *perdition*. The Apostle, in asking this question, rather aims at striking dumb the objector by a statement of God’s undoubted right, against which it does not become us to murmur, than at unfolding to us the actual state of the case’ (Alford).

Vers. 22–29. The view taken of these verses in the following notes is well set forth in the paraphrase of Sanday: ‘All this scheme of God’s dealings, apparently so severe, is really most merciful. To those who really deserved His wrath, He showed long-suffering. While for us, who now believe, Gentiles as well as Jews, He had mercy and glory in store. But in both cases the final result was strictly in accordance with prophecy. Hosea had foretold the admission of the Gentiles, Isaiah the exclusion of the greater part of the Jews.’

Ver. 22. **What if God.** The construction is elliptical: the original is simply: ‘but if.’ We may supply, as follows: ‘But *what will be said*, if,’ *i. e.*, How can the objection raised be urged, if, as is the case, God, etc.—**Willing**, etc. The participle ‘willing’ may mean either, ‘since He is willing,’ or, ‘although He is willing.’ We prefer the latter (see R. V. marg., *Am. Com.*), for (1.) the former view gives to ‘willing’ the sense of ‘purposing,’ which it does not necessarily have; (2.) it obscures the logical relation between ‘showing wrath’ and ‘enduring’; (3.) it relieves somewhat the difficult construction of ver. 23. On this view ‘willing’ refers to the spontaneous will of God, growing out of His moral character, not to His fixed purpose. This would lead Him **to shew his wrath**, etc.—**His power**. This peculiar expression, meaning ‘what is possible to Him,’ suits the view we take of ‘willing.’—**Endured with much long-suffering**. That the Apostle means to assert the fact of such endurance is plain. But how does this stand related to the previous clause? Our view accepts a contrast; ‘yet He endured:’ the other interpretation makes this the result of His purpose to show His wrath, etc. This raises a new difficulty, while the former explanation really answers the objection of ver. 19, by showing that the sovereign God had withheld the exercise of a power in accordance with His holy will, so that the endurance was really ‘with much long-suffering.’ *Comp. chap. 3: 25.*—**Vessels of wrath**. God’s wrath is meant, and these vessels are to be its objects. It is not necessary to carry out the figure and explain a vessel full of wrath. This phrase is suggested by the corresponding one in ver. 21 (‘vessel—unto dishonor’).—**Fitted unto destruction**; everlasting destruction is meant, as the contrasted word (‘glory;’ ver. 23) plainly shows, as well as the mention of God’s enduring with much long-suffering. The participle, ‘fitted,’ expresses the permanent present result of past action. It is not said that God



23 vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction: <sup>1</sup>and that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory,

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *and*.

has fitted them for destruction, although Meyer thinks this is implied. Others think that they are represented as having fitted themselves for destruction, by deserving it. Probably the mediate agency of God is not to be excluded, but the obvious differences between the two phrases ('fitted unto destruction' and 'which He afore prepared unto glory,' see below) point unmistakably to such a difference as should guard the passage against fatalistic interpretations.

Ver. 23. **And that**, or, 'also that,' in order that. The omission of 'and' by some authorities was probably due to an effort to relieve the difficult construction. The simplest view is to translate 'also that,' and connect the verse with 'endured.' Besides His great long-suffering toward the vessels of wrath, He had another purpose in the endurance, one with reference to 'vessels of mercy.' To this it is objected that it makes the purpose in reference to the vessels of mercy secondary, but in our view the long-suffering suggests the thought of the revelation of God's glory, which is fully carried out here. Alford supplies 'what if this took place,' others repeat 'willing,' which is inadmissible if 'although willing' is the correct explanation in ver. 22. To join this verse with 'fitted unto destruction' gives an unwarranted sense. Some would supply 'if,' taking this verse as the purpose of the calling mentioned in ver. 24; but this only increases the grammatical difficulties.—**The riches of his glory.** This phrase, which Godet thinks was suggested by the request of Moses (comp. ver. 15): 'Shew me thy glory' (Exod. 33: 18), refers to the fulness of the divine glory, in its beneficence, in its bestowal of blessing; riches of 'goodness, grace, mercy, wisdom, omnipotence' (Bengel). This making known is something which occurs throughout the gospel dispensation, as ver. 24 indicates.—**On vessels of mercy.** This may be joined with 'make known,' or, with 'riches'; the former being preferable. The vessels are the object of divine mercy in every age, but especially in the gospel dispensation.—**Which he afore prepared.** The verb does not mean 'predestined,' nor is it to be explained as 'prepared by providence and grace,' since the latter involves a process, while the tense here used points to a single act, which takes place 'before' these providential and gracious dealings, probably referring to the actual constitution of the individual, as clay in the hands of the potter, the result of election, yet distinct from it.—**Unto glory.** The end of the preparation is the possession of the full and eternal glory of the kingdom of heaven. Alford remarks, that the theological difficulties here 'are inherent not in the Apostle's argument, nor even in revelation, but in any consistent belief of an omnipotent and omniscient God.' Yet, the variations between the description of the two classes are so

24 *even us*, whom he also called, not from the Jews only,  
 25 but also from the Gentiles? As he saith also in Hosea,  
 I will call that my people, which was not my people:  
 And her beloved, which was not beloved.

marked, as to show that the Apostle distinguishes between God's agency in the salvation of the one class and in regard to the destruction of the other. Two different words are chosen to express the preparation; in this verse we have 'before,' which is wanting in ver. 22; here 'He' is mentioned as preparing the objects of mercy, there the indefinite passive is used; here a single act (in eternity) is spoken of, there a process, the former referring to the beginning of a development, the latter to its result. These differences cannot be accidental.

Ver. 24. **Even us**, etc. Or, 'as such He also called us.' 'Also,' (translated 'even,' in the A. V.) belongs to the word 'called,' besides preparing, He also called. The calling is that of individuals through the gospel.—**Not from the Jews only**, etc. 'The believing Jew is not called as such, because he is a Jew, but from among the Jews' (Bengel). There is no preference shown them. 'How naturally does the Apostle here return to the main subject of discussion. How skillfully is the conclusion brought out at which he has continually aimed!' (Hodge.)

Ver. 25. **As he saith also in Hosea** (2: 23). The Hebrew text is here followed more closely than the LXX. What has just been said of the Gentiles accords with ('as') this prophecy; 'also,' probably, suggests that this is a secondary (or typical) application of the passage, while 'Hosea' refers to the book, as in our usage. Either the prophecy lays down a general principle which is applicable to the calling of Gentiles, or it may be claimed that its primary reference was typical of this later event. The latter is more accordant with Paul's conception of the Old Testament, and with the peculiar character of the original prophecy.—**I will call that my people**, etc. This passage refers to the fact that the prophet had been told (Hos. 1: 6, 9) to give to a daughter and a son the names *Lo-Ruhamah* (not having obtained mercy) and *Lo-Ammi* (not my people). The former name symbolized the visible deprivation of mercy, the latter visible rejection as a people. The Apostle uses the LXX. equivalent of these names ('not beloved' for *Lo-Ruhamah*), inverting the order, to emphasize the thought 'not my people,' which was prominent in his mind. 'I will call' is substituted for 'I will say to,' without altering the sense, for 'calling' here means to 'name,' as do the words of the original prophecy. But undoubtedly the Apostle in this application had in mind the calling of the Gentiles to salvation. The original reference was to the ten tribes, not to the heathen; but they had become idolatrous, and any typical significance of the language addressed to them would apply to the reception of the Gentiles.

- 26 And it shall be, *that* in the place where it was said  
 unto them, Ye are not my people,  
 There shall they be called sons of the living God.
- 27 And Isaiah crieth concerning Israel, If the number of  
 the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is
- 28 the remnant that shall be saved: for the Lord will

Ver. 26. **And it shall be**, etc. This is the latter half of Hos. 1: 10, which is closely connected in thought with the other passage. The only variation from the LXX. is the strengthening of 'also' into 'there,' a word supplied in Italics in the A. V. of the prophecy.—**In the place**, etc. Some have thought that the prophet meant Palestine (Samaria), to which the ten tribes returned. This makes Paul's application of this part of the prophecy purely typical. Lange, more correctly, finds in Hos. 1: 11, a proof that the expression of the prophet denotes the stay of the Jews in the Gentile world. Others explain the phrase as referring generally to the heathen world; some, as meaning the Christian Church, the ideal state, etc.

Ver. 27. **And Isaiah crieth concerning Israel**. To the prediction of Hosea which is applied to the calling of the Gentiles, the Apostle adds another which presents the other side, namely, that few of Israel will be saved. The quotation, extending to the close of ver. 28, is from Isaiah 10: 22, 23, the verses being, however, differently divided. The original reference of the prophecy was to the return of the Jews from Babylon. 'Crieth' describes 'the bold declaration of a truth very offensive to the people' (Lange).—**If the number**, etc. The LXX. is followed, which varies but slightly from the Hebrew.—**Sand of the sea**. Comp. the promises to Abraham and Jacob (Gen. 22: 17; 32: 14).—**It is the remnant**. Only 'the remnant,' mainly with a reference to the call of the Gentiles, but probably suggesting the thought of the future salvation of Israel, fully brought out in chap. 11.—**Shall be saved**. So the LXX. renders the Hebrew word: 'shall return.' Paul, of course, applies the phrase in the fullest sense.

Ver. 28. This verse presents unusual difficulties, both as to the Greek text, the English translation, and the principle of citation which led the Apostle to use it.—The weight of authority supports the briefer reading, although that reading can be explained as due to an oversight on the part of a transcriber. The longer reading may be translated thus: 'For he (*i. e.*, the Lord) is finishing and cutting short his word in righteousness, because a short (lit., cut-short) word will the Lord execute upon the earth.' This longer reading does not vary materially from the LXX.; hence it may have been enlarged to correspond with that. But the variations from the Hebrew are considerable, as may be seen from the following translation:—

'Consumption (extirpation) is decided, flowing with righteousness;  
 For a consumption and decree shall the Lord of hosts make,  
 In the midst of all the land.'  
 11

execute *his* word upon the earth, finishing it and cutting it short. And, as Isaiah hath said before,  
 Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed,

The question is whether the LXX. has varied from the meaning of the original prophecy as well as from its form. We think that the LXX., especially as here applied by the Apostle, has preserved most fully the thought of the original prophecy, in fact conveying it to the mind of a reader familiar with Greek more clearly than could have been done by a literal rendering of the Hebrew.—**For** is inserted by the Apostle to strengthen the connection.—**The Lord will execute his word** (not, 'work,' as in the A. V.). The Greek word has been rendered 'decree,' to correspond more closely with the Hebrew, but this is not its meaning, though the idea of such a decree underlies Paul's use of the passage. 'Word' is preferable, *i. e.*, a word of promise and threatening (to the remnant and the mass respectively). Others prefer in view of the reference to numbers, to translate 'make a reckoning,' instead of 'execute a word,' but it is doubtful whether the phrase has this meaning. 'His' is properly supplied in English.—**Finishing it and cutting it short.** Describing the rapid accomplishment of the word uttered by the Lord. Which reading being accepted, it seems best to refer the verse to both the threatening and the promise. Some have interpreted the whole of God's mercy, of His cutting short judgment. But this explanation gives to 'righteousness' the sense of mercy. Moreover it is foreign to the Hebrew, and quite inappropriate here, where the Apostle is emphasizing the fact that *only* a remnant will be saved. The fathers had the fantastic notion that the 'short word' is 'the gospel as an abridged doctrine of salvation, in antithesis to the elaborateness of the Old Testament.' Other fanciful interpretations are only too numerous. While the original reference was to the Jews in the time of Isaiah, the Apostle here makes a prophecy of more general validity, applying it to the sad fact, discussed in this part of the Epistle, that most of the Jews were cut off, but including the other fact that the remnant should be saved. Both points are closely connected with the great thought of this section, the freedom of God in election, and this application does no violence to the original sense of the prophecy.

Ver. 29. **And, as Isaiah hath said before,** or, 'beforehand.' The punctuation we adopt, involves this explanation of the passage: 'And, even as Isaiah has predicted (so I repeat his words), Except,' etc. Another view explains: 'And (it is) as Isaiah has predicted.' The former is preferable, since Paul is thus preparing the way for his own prophetic utterances in chap. 11. 'Before' can scarcely refer to the place of the passage in the Book of Isaiah, since this is a matter of no importance in this connection. The rendering 'beforehand' indicates that this was said before the fulfilment.—**Except the Lord of Sabaoth,** etc. The Septuagint version of Isa. 1: 9 is cited word

We had become as Sodom, and had been made like unto Gomorrah.

### CHAPTER 9: 30-33.

#### *The Jews excluded through their Unbelief.*

30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, attained to righteous-

for word.—**Seed.** So the LXX. renders the Hebrew word, meaning 'remnant,' which occurs in the original prophecy. This suggests an idea found in Isa. 6: 13 (comp. Ezra 9: 2), that the remnant should be 'a holy seed.' In fact, the Jewish Christians, who escaped the judgment which fell on their nation at the destruction of Jerusalem, constituted such a seed for the Christian Church.—**Become** is properly substituted for 'been.'—As regards the application made by Paul of this prophecy, it will seem all the more appropriate when the full scope of the original prediction is considered. 'The prophet with a few ground-strokes gathers up the whole future of the people of Israel. He announces a period of judgment as an unavoidable passage way; then, again, a time of salvation. But the period of judgment comprehends in itself all the judgments then standing without as yet: every visitation, of which history from that time on knows aught, is a proof of this word of prophecy, a fulfilment of it. . . . Just so is the period of salvation conceived as the sum-total of all fulfilment in general, since the complete realization of all God's promises will bring what will still all the longing and the thirsting of the human heart from thenceforth and forever' (Dreschler). With this thought of the rejuvenation of Israel, through a remnant which is also a germ, the Apostle passes to the other side of the dark problem, namely, the unbelief of the Jews as the human cause of their rejection. This phase of the subject is introduced in ver. 30, with which, therefore, we begin another section.

### CHAPTERS 9: 30—10: 21.

#### 2. MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY; THE JEWS EXCLUDED THROUGH THEIR OWN UNBELIEF.

For convenience we may divide this passage into two sections: (1.) Chap. 9: 30-33 sets forth the fact that the Jews had not attained to righteousness because they rejected God's way of attaining it, namely, by faith. The responsibility for their rejection therefore rests upon themselves. (1.) The Apostle proceeds to lay emphasis upon this position, by proving that the Old Testament itself pointed to Christ as the end of the law, and to faith as the one way and the universal way of salvation; hence the unbelief of the Jews, in spite of the many prophetic warnings, left them without excuse, as a disobedient and gainsaying people; chap. 10: 1-21.

31 ness, even the righteousness which is of faith: but Israel, following after a law of righteousness, did not

1. *The Jews excluded through their Unbelief*, vers. 30–33.

The Gentiles were saved, the Jews failed of salvation (vers. 30, 31); but the latter fact was due to their seeking righteousness, not by faith, but as by works (ver. 32); they took offence at Christ, who is a stone of stumbling to unbelievers, as well as an object of faith (ver. 33).

Ver. 30. **What shall we say then?** Precisely as in ver. 14, where, however, it introduces an objection. But when followed by an assertion, it further unfolds an argument from what precedes. Here it introduces a summing up of 'the historical result from the foregoing prophecies' (Meyer), yet with a view to present a new phase of the subject. What he would say is that 'Gentiles,' etc.—**The Gentiles.** The article is wanting, and should not be inserted in English; what is affirmed is true of Gentiles, but not of the Gentiles as a whole.—**Which followed not** (or, 'who were not following') **after righteousness.** 'Pursuing,' as in running for a prize. This 'prize' which the Gentiles did not pursue was 'righteousness.' While this word does not mean 'justification,' we need not give it here a purely ethical sense. For some of the Gentiles had a high ethical ideal which they pursued. But they did not follow this ethical aim with the thought of attaining a verdict of righteousness before God. Conformity to His law was not their ideal of virtue, nor was His judgment the ultimate ground of acceptance. Thus much we may understand, both from Paul's previous discussions, and from what follows.—**Attained to righteousness.** The verb is used of laying hold of the prize in the Grecian games. Here the technical Christian sense of 'righteousness,' righteousness from God (chap. 1: 17), seems necessary.—**Even the righteousness which is of faith.** The peculiar form of the original suggests that this is the true righteousness.

Ver. 31. **But Israel, following after a law of righteousness.** Evidently the Mosaic law. Here, however, it is described as a law which affords righteousness. Israel pursued this law in order that justification might ensue, but without any true sense of its contents, or real apprehension of its mission (comp chap. 10: 4). Others explain the phrase as 'righteousness of the law,' which is ungrammatical, while some, without good reason, explain 'law' in the general sense of rule.—**Did not arrive at that law.** The word 'arrive' is here substituted for 'attain' (ver. 30), and the best authorities omit 'of righteousness,' which would naturally be inserted by the transcribers, to make the sense more obvious. The omission makes impossible that (otherwise objectionable) explanation of the verse, which takes 'law' here as 'the law of faith,' and in the previous clause as 'the law of Moses.' The better view is: they did not even arrive at the real inward character of that law, which they pursued as affording

32 arrive at *that* law. Wherefore? <sup>1</sup> Because *they sought*  
*it* not by faith, but as it were by works. They stum-  
 33 bled at the stone of stumbling; even as it is written,  
 Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a  
 rock of offence:

And he that believeth on <sup>2</sup> him shall not be put to  
 shame.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Because*, doing it not by faith, but as it were by works, they stumbled.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *it*.

righteousness. They arrived at the letter, but not at the meaning of the Holy Spirit, for the law, rightly understood, would have led them to Christ.

Ver. 32. **Wherefore?** Why did they fail to arrive at that law, which they yet pursued as affording righteousness.—**Because they sought it not by faith.** The words ‘they sought it’ are properly supplied. ‘Had they started from *faith* in their striving, they would have obtained in Christianity the realization of their endeavor’ (Meyer). They would have arrived at the law, in its real sense, and it would have become to them a ‘law of righteousness.’ Comp. chap. 10: 4. Here the Apostle distinctly asserts that the Jews were themselves responsible for their position, and the general principle which is involved here, is implied in every other passage of Scripture which bears upon the awful problem. The same principle, or fact, is asserted in those doctrinal statements which lay the greatest emphasis upon God’s sovereignty; see Lange, *Romans*, pp. 329, 330, and comp. Hodge, Shedd, and others *in loco*.—**But as it were by works.** They imagined they were doing the works of the law, while really they failed to do them, because they did not apprehend the purpose of the law, nor the spirit in which its requirements should be met.—**They stumbled.** ‘For’ is properly omitted. The R. V. marg. joins this closely with what precedes; but this view disturbs the relation to ‘wherefore?’ and is far less striking.—**At the stone of stumbling;** to which repeated reference is made in Scripture; see below on ver. 33. That Christ Himself is meant is evident from the New Testament application of the phrase. The figure is very appropriate to the previous notion of following (vers. 30, 31). ‘Offence at Christ is culpable; it is taken not given’ (Heubner).

Ver. 33. **Even as it is written**, etc. Two passages from Isaiah are here combined.—**Stone of stumbling**, etc. In Isa. 8: 14, God Himself is represented as being ‘for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence’ to His enemies. This was properly applied to the Messiah by the Jews, and to our Lord by the Apostle. But he substitutes these expressions for similar ones in Isa. 28: 16, where the figure of a corner-stone occurs, applied by both Peter and Paul to Christ. This combination is both justifiable and natural. In both cases the supreme revelation of Jehovah in the Messiah is referred to; in one

## CHAPTER 10: 1-21.

*Proof that the Jews were Excluded through their Unbelief.*

1 Brethren, my heart's <sup>1</sup> desire and my supplication to

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *good pleasure.*

passage as a sanctuary for His people, but for a stone of stumbling, etc., to His enemies; in the other as a corner-stone laid in Zion, for a secure foundation.—**He that believeth**, etc. In chap. 10: 11 this clause is introduced again, but there 'whosoever' occurs, which is to be omitted here, according to the best authorities. In the LXX. it is not found; nor could it be emphatic here, since the antithesis to 'stumbled' makes 'believeth' the prominent word. — **On him**, or, 'it' (R. V. marg.). The Greek pronoun may be either masculine or neuter. But the Messianic reference is better indicated by the rendering 'Him.' — **Shall not be put to shame.** The Hebrew is: 'shall not make haste,' or, 'flee hastily,' with a primary reference to escaping from danger, but the LXX., from which Paul varies very slightly, gives the meaning with substantial correctness (comp. 'confounded' in the margin of the A. V.). This negative promise is rightly regarded as implying a positive blessing. 'As though he had said: Because Christ is called the stone of stumbling, there is no reason that we should dread Him, for He is appointed for life to believers' (Calvin).

II. *Proof that the Jews were Excluded through their Unbelief*, vers. 1-21.

The section may be divided into four paragraphs:

The Jews with their religious zeal failed to recognize (1.) Christ as the end of the law (vers. 1-4); (2.) the *gratuitous* character of salvation (vers. 5-11); (3.) the *universal* character of salvation (vers. 12-18); and (4.) all of these things together with their rebellion had been prophesied (vers. 19-21). The last paragraph contains the direct application to the Jews. 'They could not excuse themselves by this, that God had not done His part to make humanity know the gospel, or that it had not reached them, or that they could not have seen what *their* conduct in regard to it and *God's* dealings with the Gentiles would be' (Tholuck).

The argument is very concise, sometimes obscure, but there is general agreement that the responsibility of the Jews is proven from the Old Testament Scriptures, which point to salvation in Christ as *by faith* and hence universal, so that unbelief is the ground of rejection. The evangelical purpose of the Old Testament is implied throughout, and the Scripture citations assume that 'Christ is the end of the law' (ver. 4) in its typical and prophetic significance.

The section opens with an expression of Paul's affection for his nation, an echo of chap. 9: 1-5, and with his testimony to their religious zeal, which, however, did not prevent them from refusing Christ and His gratuitous and universal salvation, offered to all who believe. Despite their zeal, their unbelief must exclude them. The argument is carried out without any reference to the supposed conflict with the position taken in chap. 9: 6-29.

Ver. 1. **Brethren.** This term of affection, though not addressed



2 God is for them, that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but 3 not according to knowledge. For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their

to Jewish readers, was probably not suggested by Paul's feeling toward them; his severity was consistent with love; comp. chap. 9: 1, etc., 1 Cor. 9: 20; Gal. 3: 15.—**My heart's desire**, lit., 'good pleasure,' not 'good will;' the latter sense does not suit the context. 'Desire' is not exact, yet probably suggests the true sense: the salvation of Israel was the ideal of his heart (Godet). A Greek particle occurs here, which implies that this verse presents the first member of a contrast; the corresponding word is not found in what follows, but the contrasted thought is evidently expressed in ver. 3.—**And my supplication to God is for them**. The word 'Israel' is poorly supported, and was substituted for 'them,' as an explanatory gloss, since a church lesson began here. The correct reading shows the intimate connection of thought with the close of chap. 9.—**That they might be saved**; lit., 'unto salvation.' Their salvation is the end (ideal) of his 'good pleasure,' and this he asks God to grant. The mixture of these two ideas need occasion no difficulty when it is remembered that in the New Testament the combined purpose and purport of prayers are usually introduced by the word meaning 'in order that.'

Ver. 2. **For I bear them witness**. The reason for his desire and prayer is the fact to which he now bears his testimony.—**They have a zeal for God**, *i. e.*, of which God is the object, not great zeal, or, godly zeal. Their zeal was religious, conscientious, but misdirected.—**But not according to knowledge**. The word often means full knowledge, and is here used to denote correct, vital knowledge. Answering to the objective advantages of the Jews (chap. 9: 1-5) was this religious zeal, which degenerated into blind fanaticism. But this, we infer from the passage, is better than indifferentism. Where there is some earnestness, there is something to hope for. In this respect the condition of many in Christian lands is less encouraging than that of the Jews in Paul's time.

Ver. 3. **For**. In vers. 3, 4, we have the proof from fact, that their religious zeal was 'not according to knowledge.' The thought, however, is in contrast with ver. 1, as already indicated.—**Being ignorant of**. There is a verbal correspondence with 'knowledge' in the original. We need not press the phrase so far as to render it 'mistaking,' or 'overlooking.'—**God's righteousness**, as throughout the Epistle, 'that righteousness which avails before God, which becomes ours in justification' (Alford).—**Seeking to establish their own**. 'Righteousness' is probably to be omitted in this clause, although the evidence is nearly evenly balanced. 'Striving' suggests that they would *acquire* what according to God's method of salvation

own, they did not subject themselves to the righteous-  
 4 ness of God. For Christ is the end of the law unto  
 5 righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses  
 writeth that the man that doeth the righteousness

was to be *bestowed*, while 'establish' or, 'set up,' suggests the pride of their endeavor.—**Did not subject themselves**, etc. 'The verb is not passive, but middle; for the former would indicate merely the historical result, while the latter points to their personal guilt, a thought better suited to the context, and bringing out the implied contrast with ver. 1.—**The righteousness of God**; here 'conceived of as a divine ordinance, to which one submits one's self, through faith' (Meyer), as the context plainly indicates.

Ver. 4. **For Christ is the end of the law.** The emphatic word is 'end'; its meaning, however, is open to discussion. Explanations: (1.) Christ is the *object*, or *aim*, of the law. This may be expanded in two ways: (a.) The end of the law was to make men righteous, and this was accomplished in Christ; hence the Jews by rejecting Him did not submit themselves, etc. (b.) The end of the law was to lead to Him, hence by stumbling at Him, while seeking their own righteousness, they did not submit themselves, etc. The two may be combined; each of them preserves the force of 'for,' as a proof of ver. 3. (2.) Christ is the *fulfilment* of the law. This, which is true enough, does not meet the requirements of this passage. (3.) Christ is the *termination*, conclusion, of the law. So many commentators, among them Meyer, who paraphrases: 'for in Christ the validity of the law has come to an end, that righteousness should become the portion of every one who believes.' This 'chronological' view has much to recommend it, especially the fact that there is such a sharp contrast made in vers. 5, 6, between the law and Christ. On the other hand we may ask why should Paul quote from the law, if it had lost its validity? This view, moreover, does not furnish so strong a proof of the position of ver. 3, as (1.) which is, on the whole, the preferable explanation.—**Unto righteousness to every one that believeth.** If 'end' is here taken in the sense of 'aim,' then 'unto' expresses the *result*; if it means 'conclusion,' then this clause indicates the *purpose* of the abrogation of the legal system. The emphasis here rests on 'believeth,' since it was thus that men submitted themselves to the righteousness of God (ver. 3).

Ver. 5. **For.** Here the Apostle enters upon a proof from the Old Testament of his position that the one way of salvation is by faith (vers. 5-11). He cites the law against the law as a way of obtaining righteousness. Other citations follow, in support of similar positions. But this verse, in itself is a direct proof of ver. 4. (Weiss regards it as a proof that the zeal of the Jews was 'not according to knowledge').—**Moses writeth that the man that doeth the righteousness which is of the law shall live thereby.** The R. V. follows

6 which is of the law shall live thereby. But the

the text which seems to be better established. The critical questions, however, are not only numerous, but difficult to decide. The authority of the Sinaitic manuscript has turned the scale in regard to the following readings: 'that' to be placed immediately after 'writeth;' 'these things' to be omitted; 'thereby' (lit., 'in it') referring to 'righteousness,' to be substituted for 'by (lit., in) them.' The acceptance of these changes alters the construction, as indicated above. The received text conforms more closely to the LXX. (Lev. 18: 5), which is an argument against it. In Gal. 3: 12, where the Apostle quotes the same passage, the variations are slight, although 'man' is to be omitted there, while it is retained here (as in the LXX.). It will appear then that the Apostle interprets the passage, instead of citing it directly, and his interpretation is obviously correct.—**The man that doeth.** The participle sums up the obedience as one act, which is the condition of 'living;' the starting-point is not faith, but the exact and full performance of that which the law requires, which the Apostle here terms: **the righteousness which is of the law.** It is implied, but not directly asserted, that no one had thus fulfilled it.—**Shall live thereby** (lit., 'in it'), *i. e.*, in this righteousness, 'it will be the means of salvation and life for him who really does the law' ((Godet). It has been maintained that 'live,' in Lev. 18: 5, and similar Old Testament passages, refers only to temporal prosperity, but even the Jewish interpreters included more, and certainly 'life' in the New Testament has an exalted meaning. Since the Apostle implies that the higher obedience and consequently the higher reward were unattainable, it has been urged that Moses could not have seemingly proposed any such meaning as is here involved. But this either dwarfs the moral scope of the law, or puts it in a false position; for the law, although made by the Jews merely an expression of the condition of a legal righteousness, was far more than this: it led to Christ (comp. ver. 4; Gal. 3: 19-25). The antithesis between vers. 5 and 6 is relative, not absolute. Even the doing and living, so far as they became a reality, pointed to Christ, who by His vicarious doing and living makes us *live and do*.

Vers. 6-8. The language from 'Say not in thy heart' (ver. 6) to 'in thy heart' (ver. 8), is that of Moses in Deut. 30: 12-14, according to the LXX., with variations and interpolated explanations. The question then arises: How are we to understand Paul's use of the passage? Three answers have been given: (1.) as an interpretation of the deeper sense of the original passage; (2.) as an employment of it in a new sense; (3.) as an application of the general principle underlying the words of Moses. Of these views we decidedly prefer the *first*, urging in favor of it the following considerations: (*a.*) Paul is proving that 'Christ is the end of the law for righteousness,' etc. If that means, as we hold, the *aim*, or object, of the law, then it is natural that the Apostle would use the law itself to prove it. (*b.*) The contrast is

righteousness which is of faith saith thus, Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to

not between 'the righteousness of faith' and 'Moses,' but between the former and 'the righteousness which is of the law' (ver. 5), and the correct reading only makes this contrast the sharper. Hence we may expect to find here what Moses writes respecting the righteousness by faith over against what he has written of the righteousness of the law. But if this is an adaptation or application, the words derive no enforcement from Moses. (c.) As ver. 5 stands in the received text, it appears to be a direct verbal citation. But the correct reading shows that the words of Moses are used in the same free manner both in that verse and in vers. 6-8. Hence it cannot be argued that Paul cites in the one case, and adapts, or applies, in the other. (d.) It is unlikely that Paul would argue respecting the case of the Jews, from their own Scriptures, and give the language a meaning that was not, at least, typically involved in the primary sense. (e.) This interpretation is neither far-fetched nor forced. The words of Moses referred to the law, that very law the end of which was Christ. When viewed as a thing to be done (ver. 5), it did not lead to Christ; viewed as a revelation, intelligible and accessible, leading to *trust* in God then (comp. Deut. 30:) and more fully to faith in the Christ when He had come, the words of Moses respecting it had as their deepest meaning a reference to Christ: 'if spoken of *the law* as a manifestation of God in man's heart and mouth, much more were they spoken of Him, who is God manifest in the flesh, the end of the law and the prophets' (Alford). (f.) This view preserves both the connection and the contrast between the law and the gospel, and thus accords with chap. 9: 31 ('did not arrive at that law'), and with the whole sweep of Paul's argument. Accepting this view, we extend the application of 'Moses writeth' (ver. 5) to the whole passage. 'The righteousness which comes from faith is personified (comp. Heb. 12: 5), so that the following words of Moses, *in which Paul recognizes an allegorically and typically prophetic description of this righteousness*, appear as its self-description' (Meyer). The objections to the other views will be readily inferred from what has been said. Both of them grow out of a failure to recognize the true validity of the law (and of the Mosaic economy) as leading to Christ, and make too sharp a contrast between law and gospel (rather than between 'doing' and 'believing'). Moreover, whatever emphasis is laid on the position that Paul bases his argument upon the principle which underlies the words of Moses, is in reality a concession to the view we have advocated. To deny any such agreement in principle seems to deny honesty to the Apostle's argument. For convenience we append a literal rendering of the entire passage (Deut. 30: 11-14) from the LXX.

11. Because this commandment, which I command thee this day, is not exalted (out of reach), nor is it far from thee. 12. It is not in the heaven above, saying, Who shall ascend for us into the heaven, and bring it to us, and hearing it we will do it? 13.

7 bring Christ down :) or, Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.)

Nor is it beyond the sea saying, Who shall pass through to beyond the sea and may bring it for us, and may make it heard, and we will do it? 14. Very nigh thee is the word, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, and thy hands to do it.

Ver. 6. **But the righteousness which is of faith.** As already indicated, 'but' introduces a contrast with the other 'righteousness' of doing (ver. 5). The personification is quite natural.—**Saith thus;** not, 'speaketh,' which suggests a contrast with 'writeth.'—**Say not in thy heart.** (LXX., defectively; 'saying;' A. V.: 'that thou shouldst say.') This phrase is = 'think not,' but usually suggests an evil thought.—**Who shall ascend into heaven?** 'For us' (LXX.) is omitted. This question is thus explained by the Apostle in his own language, which he substitutes for the clause of design in the Old Testament passage. Similar clauses are substituted in vers. 7, 8.—**That is, to bring Christ down.** 'That is' introduces the explanation, but the whole clause may mean either (1.) 'Whoever asks this' question, says, in effect, who will bring Christ down? thus denying that He has come; or (2.) 'That is, in order to bring Christ down;' substituting this *purpose* for that expressed in Deuteronomy. The latter sense agrees best with the view that Paul is interpreting the passage in Deuteronomy; the former with the other theories respecting his use of it. We interpret this clause as referring to the Incarnation, the coming down from heaven of the preëxistent and promised Messiah (comp. ver. 9). Others refer it to the present exalted position of Christ.

Ver. 7. **Who shall descend into the abyss?** LXX. 'Who shall pass through into beyond the sea?' The descent of Christ to the realm of the dead 'is in any case the *undoubted presupposition*, which led Paul to substitute the words of our passage for those of the original' (Meyer). The next clause compels us to take this view, but various explanations have been given of the variation from the Old Testament language. 'The probable solution of the difference is, that the ideas *beyond the sea* and *beneath the earth* coincide as designations of the realm of the dead' (Lange).—**That is,** etc. See the similar clause in ver. 6. The two verses imply that the Incarnation and the Resurrection are accomplished facts; hence that such questions are forbidden by 'the righteousness of faith.' But what kind of questions are they? simply of unbelief, or also of perplexity, or of anxiety? Certainly the fundamental error is one of unbelief, and that in regard to the main facts here presented (comp. ver. 9). But it is not necessary to exclude the other views, which are suggested by the original passage: 'The anxious follower after righteousness is not disappointed by an impracticable code, nor mocked by an unintelligible revelation; the word is near him, therefore accessible; plain and simple, and therefore apprehensible—deals with definite historical fact, and there-

8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, 9 which we preach: <sup>1</sup> because if thou shalt <sup>2</sup> confess with

<sup>1</sup> Or, *that*.

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities read *confess the word with thy mouth, that Jesus is Lord*.

fore certain' (Alford). It is but fair to present another view of the whole passage, as summed up by Godet: 'All the *doing* demanded from man by the law (ver. 5) and which he can accomplish only imperfectly, has been already perfectly accomplished by Christ, whether it has to do with the conquest of heaven by holiness, or the doing away of condemnation by expiation. There only remains then to man, in order to be saved, to *believe* in that work by applying it to himself; and this is that which the righteousness of faith commands us (ver. 8), after having forbidden us (vers. 6, 7) to pretend ourselves to open heaven and close hell. . . . Christ having charged Himself with the *doing*, and having left to us only the *believing*, the work of Christ puts an end to the legal *régime*: that which the Apostle would prove (ver. 4).' So Beet: 'Moses asserts the great principle that a revelation from God makes needless, and therefore ought to put an end to, all human effort for that which He reveals.'

Ver. 8. **But what saith it?** This is inserted to introduce the positive statement of Moses; but 'it' here refers to 'the righteousness of faith' (ver. 6).—**The word is nigh thee**, etc. (comp. the LXX. as given above).—**In thy mouth, and in thy heart**. These terms explain how the word is nigh. As a matter of fact, the pious Israelite had the law in his mouth and heart, *i. e.*, to confess and believe, precisely as Paul afterwards explains in applying the language to the gospel. Others find in the original passage only a reference to the familiar accessible character of the law (see above). But after all any true grasp of God's revelation, even in the days of Moses, was gained in the way Paul describes.—**The word of faith**; either respecting faith, or, which forms the substratum and object of faith (Alford).—**Which we preach**. Paul himself, and all other preachers of the gospel. This explanation of 'word' in the Old Testament passage is in accordance with the statement of ver. 4. Any nearness of the Old Testament 'word' was due to its leading to Christ, whom the gospel proclaimed as the object of faith; hence to this 'word' the Old Testament passage pointed. Some limit the reference to the easy and familiar doctrine of faith.

Ver. 9. **Because**. The word may mean 'that' (as in A. V.), indicating the purport of the word preached, but 'because' is preferable here. We have then a proof that 'the word is nigh.'—**If thou shalt confess with thy mouth**. This is placed first, to correspond with 'in thy mouth' (ver. 8); after the proof is completed the order is changed (ver. 10). The marginal reading is accepted by Westcott and Hort, mainly upon the authority of B.—**Jesus as Lord**. There is

thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt  
 10 be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto  
 righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made  
 11 unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever

little doubt that this is the correct explanation. This confession implies that He has become Incarnate (comp. ver. 6: 'who shall ascend into heaven?'); for 'Lord' is the term applied to Jehovah in the LXX. 'In this appellation is the sum of faith and salvation' (Bengel).—**Believe in thy heart.** Comp. 'in thy heart'; ver. 8. 'Heart' is to be taken in the wide Biblical sense, and not limited to the affections.—**That God raised him,** etc. This answers to the question of ver. 7. Paul always gives prominence to this fact of Redemption. His example should be followed by all modern preachers.—**Thou shalt be saved.** The requisites for salvation, as here stated, are: belief with the heart in the Resurrection of Jesus, not as an isolated historical event, but as involving the previous Advent of the Son of God, who is now the ascended Lord—and hence confession of Him as Lord.

Ver. 10. **For with the heart,** etc. This is an explanation of ver. 9. 'The idea of *salvation* is analyzed; it comprises two facts: being *justified* and being *saved* (in the full sense of the word). The first fact is specially connected with the act of *faith*, the second with that of *confession*' (Godet). Here belief comes first, in accordance with Christian experience.—**Man believeth,** lit., 'it is believed,' **unto righteousness,** *i. e.*, with this result, that righteousness is obtained; men are accounted righteous when they believe with the heart.—**And with the mouth confession is made,** or, 'man confesseth,' lit., 'it is confessed.' The impersonal form has the force of a general statement. We might render: 'faith is exercised,' to conform with 'confession is made.'—**Unto salvation,** with this result, namely, 'salvation'; here including, as we hold, sanctification and glory. It is not necessary to limit this to the latter. The two parallel clauses are closely connected. True faith always leads to confession; confession is nothing without true faith. Public confession is a confirmation of our own faith; a bond of union with others; an outward pledge to consistent living; but above all an act of loyalty to Christ.

Ver. 11. **For the scripture saith.** Isa. 28: 16, already cited in chap. 9: 33. After the extended proof that 'Christ is the end of the law unto righteousness to every one that believeth,' the passage is introduced again to confirm that statement. Strictly speaking 'for' furnishes a proof of the former half of ver. 10.—**Whosoever,** etc. The word answering to 'who-soever,' more literally, 'every one,' is not found in the original passage (comp. chap. 9: 33). But it is properly inserted here, because this idea of universality, which is implied in the original prophecy, has not only been established in the intervening discussion, but is the theme of the succeeding verses.

12 believeth on him shall not be put to shame. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek: for the same *Lord* is Lord of all, and is rich unto all that  
13 call upon him: for, Whosoever shall call upon the

Vers. 12-18. These verses should form a separate paragraph. In the previous verses the method of faith is shown to have been God's way of salvation in all ages; here it is declared to be His way for all people. It is *gratuitous*, hence *universal*. This way is *open* to all (vers. 12, 13) and is to be *preached* to all (vers. 14-18). This serves to emphasize the responsibility of the Jews for their own exclusion.

Ver. 12. **For there is no distinction** (comp. chap. 3: 22) **between Jew and Greek**, *i. e.*, Gentile (comp. chap. 1: 18 and elsewhere). Proof of the universal 'whosoever' (ver. 11).—**For the same Lord is Lord of all**. Other constructions have been defended, but the main thought remains unaltered. It seems best to refer this, not to the Father, but to Christ (the exclusive subject since ver. 4), especially as He is termed 'Lord of all' (Acts 10: 36), and ver. 9 has emphasized the confession of Him 'as Lord.' The oneness of the Lord is a proof that there is no distinction.—**And is rich**; shows Himself rich in giving.—**Unto all**. Toward all the riches of His grace may be directed; this proves that there is no distinction; but only those are really the recipients of it, **that call upon him**, thus proving their faith by their invocation of Him, which is a confession of Him. 'The true confession of faith is in effect that cry of adoration: Jesus Lord! And that cry can be uttered equally by every human heart, Jew or Gentile, without its having need of any law. Behold how the universalism founded on faith excludes henceforth the dominion of law' (Godet).

Ver. 13. **For whosoever**. The citation is from Joel 2: 32; comp. Acts 2: 21, where the LXX. is even more closely followed. 'For' is inserted, since the citation is introduced here as a proof of ver. 12.—**Shall call upon the name of the Lord**, etc. The prophecy refers to 'Jehovah,' but in His final revelation of Himself (comp. Acts 2: 17: 'in the last days'). If Christ is meant in ver. 12, then this prophecy is applied 'justly to *Christ*, who has appeared in the name of God, and continually rules as His Representative and Revealer, and Mediator, whose name was now the very specific object of the Christian calling on the Lord' (Meyer). When, however, this author speaks of this 'calling' as not being 'the worshipping absolutely,' but rather 'worship according to that relativity in the consciousness of the worshipper, which is conditioned by the relation of Christ to the Father,' he is unsupported by the records of Christian experience. The heart of the believer, calling upon Jesus as Lord, makes a loyal surrender to Him and in its joyous devotion to the Master, is not apt to make this distinction between absolute and relative worship,—a distinction which is not in accordance with Biblical monotheism, and is verbal rather than real.



14 name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a  
15 preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring <sup>1</sup> glad tidings of good things!

<sup>1</sup> Or, a gospel.

Ver. 14. **How then shall they call**, etc. In the case of the four verbs: 'shall call,' 'shall believe,' 'shall hear,' 'shall preach,' the subjunctive (deliberative) form is better supported. 'They' throughout is indefinite. 'Can' might be substituted for 'shall,' but is perhaps too strong. The Apostle argues from the cited prophecy (ver. 13) the necessity of preachers sent forth in accordance with another prophecy (ver. 15), in order by thus enforcing the universality of the gospel to show more plainly the responsibility of the Jews.—**On him**, etc. Here and throughout the reference is to Christ.—**Have not believed**; lit., 'did not believe,' indicating the beginning of faith; but English usage favors 'have believed,' and so in the next clause.—**Whom they have not heard**. The reference is to hearing Christ through His preachers, or, to hearing the Christ who is preached; since 'whom' here cannot be grammatically explained as = about whom.—**Without a preacher**; apart from, independently of, one preaching. *i. e.*, proclaiming a message as a herald.

Ver. 15. **Except they be sent**. Sent by Christ is implied, but the main thought is sent, 'through the word of God' (ver. 17). Commissioned through the message they proclaim, as this citation from Isaiah indicates.—**As it is written** (Isa. 52: 7).—**How beautiful**, etc. The four oldest manuscripts, together with minor authorities, sustain the briefer reading: 'How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!' The fuller form is that of the LXX., hence it is likely to have arisen from a desire to conform. The Apostle has also omitted 'upon the mountains,' and substituted the plural for the singular. (The A. V. obscures the parallelism of the original; 'preach the gospel' and 'bring glad tidings,' represent the same word.) The prophecy is undoubtedly Messianic, and, hence, properly applied by the Apostle to the preachers of the gospel. The primary reference to the restoration from exile 'derived all its value from being introductory to that most glorious deliverance to be effected by the Redeemer' (Hodge). The necessity and dignity of the preachers of the gospel, as here set forth, form a solemn warning to all who attempt to preach without being sent, as well as an encouragement to all, however feeble, who have been sent. The character of the message is the main test of the preacher's mission.

16 But they did not all hearken to the <sup>1</sup>glad tidings.  
 For Isaiah saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?  
 17 So belief *cometh* of hearing, and hearing by the word  
 18 of Christ. But I say, Did they not hear? Yea,  
 verily,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *gospel*.

Ver. 16. **But**, on the contrary, contrasting the preaching to all with the limited result, **they**, indefinitely used, though the application to the Jews is implied, **did not hearken to the glad tidings**. All who heard did not 'hearken.' There is a verbal correspondence in the Greek also. Faith was required; those who did not believe were those who did not hearken.—**For** introduces the proof that 'not all' hearkened.—**Isaiah saith** (chap. 3: 1). Paul believed that Isaiah was the author of the entire book. This state of things was foreseen and predicted; was not accidental, but was recognized in the Divine plan.—**Who hath believed our report?** The word 'report' is the same as 'hearing' in ver. 17; the variation in rendering obscures the argument. But it is difficult to find a word which will express the exact sense, namely, 'that which is heard,' almost equivalent to that which is preached. In older English the phrases 'a good hearing,' 'a bad hearing,' occur in the sense of good and bad news. It confuses the sense to understand it as what is heard of God (= the word of God), and the act of hearing is not meant; comp. Gal. 3: 2. The citation is quite exact from the LXX., 'Lord' being inserted. The Messianic reference of the passage is an ample warrant for the application here made by the Apostle, to unbelief in the Christian preaching. The preaching of the gospel is a duty, whether men hearken or not; to believe the message is the necessary condition of really hearkening.

Ver. 17. **So belief cometh of hearing**, *i. e.*, from the announcement which is heard. 'The heard preaching of the gospel brings about in men's minds faith in Christ' (Meyer).—**And hearing by the word of Christ**. The weight of authority favors the substitution of 'Christ' for 'God.' 'Word' is literally 'saying,' and probably means command or order, taking up again the idea of the verb, 'except they be sent' (ver. 15). Thus the authority of the message is emphasized over against the unbelief of some, preparing the way for the application to the responsibility of the Jews.

Ver. 18. **But I say**. The strongly adversative 'but' introduces the answer to a possible objection, in excuse of the unbelief spoken of in ver. 16.—**Did they not hear?** 'They,' *i. e.*, those who did not hearken; the Jews are meant, but not yet directly spoken of. The question in the Greek points to a negative answer: It cannot be that they did not hear = they did hear, though they did not hearken, hence have not this excuse.—**Yea, verily**. Comp. chap. 9: 20, where the same word is rendered 'nay but.' Here the thought is: So far from

Their sound went out into all the earth,  
And their words unto the ends of <sup>1</sup> the world.

19 But I say, Did Israel not know? First Moses saith,

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *the inhabited earth.*

its being the case that they did not hear, the very opposite is true.—**Their sound**, etc. The rest of the verse is taken from Ps. 19: 4 (A. V.), in the exact words of the LXX. But it is not cited as in itself a proof from Scripture; for there is no formula of quotation, and the Psalmist is speaking of the universal revelation of God *in nature*, not in the gospel. The Apostle applies the language to the universal preaching of the gospel, which he affirms. There is, however, a propriety in this application. 'The manifestation of God in nature, is for all His creatures to whom it is made, a pledge of their participation in the clearer and higher revelation' (Hengstenberg) That the gospel had actually been preached everywhere is not what the Apostle affirms. It had become universal in its scope, and occupied the central positions of the Roman world. Its wide extension among the Gentiles showed that the Jews could find no excuse for their unbelief in not having heard. Everywhere there had been opportunity for them to hear. The verse applies even more strikingly to those in gospel lands.—'Sound' is the LXX. rendering of the Hebrew 'line,' which in the Psalm means 'a musical chord.'—**The world**, lit., 'the inhabited earth.' The R. V. adds this margin where this word occurs, to distinguish it from similar terms.

Ver. 19. **But I say**; as in ver. 18, introducing a similar question, and another supposed excuse—**Did Israel not know?** This is the direct application to the Jews, who have been in mind throughout. The anticipated answer (as the original indicates) is a denial of the not-knowing, *i. e.*, an affirmation that Israel knew. But 'knew' *what?* The connection with ver. 18 favors the explanation: 'knew that the gospel would go forth into all the earth.' The prophecies which follow, it is true, prove that the gospel was to pass over from the Jews to the Gentiles. But the more general view seems preferable. Meyer: 'This universal destination of the preaching of Christ expressed in ver. 18 must have been known by the Jews, for long ago Moses and also Isaiah had prophesied the conversion of the Gentiles.—Isaiah likewise, the refractory spirit of opposition thereto of the Jews (vers. 20, 21).' If they had not known this, there might have been some excuse for them, as surprised by the event. But there was not even this palliation. Many commentators supply 'the gospel.' But the sad fact which Paul discusses, is the rejection of the gospel by Israel. Hence the form of the question (see above) is fatal to this view.—**First Moses saith**. From this point to the close of the chapter we have the direct Scriptural proof, that the Jews ought not to have been in ignorance. The universality had been announced to Abraham, but Moses was the 'first' to write of this; others, among them Isaiah, re-

I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is no nation.

With a nation void of understanding will I anger you.

20 And Isaiah is very bold, and saith,

I was found of them that sought me not;

I became manifest unto them that asked not of me.

21 But as to Israel he saith, All the day long did I spread out my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

peated the prophecy.—**I will provoke you**, etc. The citation is quite exact, from the LXX. of Deut. 32: 21. 'You' is substituted for 'them.'—**With that which is no nation.** The preposition is almost='on account of,' but implying more than that: 'aroused on account of and directed against a "no-nation."' 'No-people' (comp. chap. 9: 25) is the meaning of the Hebrew.—**With a nation void of understanding** (idolatrous) **will I anger you**, or, 'excite you to anger.' The use made by the Apostle of this prophecy is very apt. 'Moses prophetically assumes the departure of Israel from God, and His rejection of them, and denounces from God that, as they had moved Him to jealousy with their "no-gods" (idols) and provoked Him to anger by their vanities,—so He would, by receiving into His favor a "no-nation" make them jealous, and provoke them to anger by adopting instead of them a foolish nation' (Alford). The application of the original prophecy need not be confined to the Canaanites.

Ver. 20. **And** (introducing another prophet) **Isaiah is very bold, and saith.** 'But Isaiah even ventures to say' (Lange), or, he is emboldened, and hence he says.—**I was found of them**, etc. Isa. 15: 1 is here cited, with transposed clauses; otherwise quite closely after the LXX. which changes: 'I was sought' (Hebrew) into 'I was found,' but quite in accordance with the original prophecy. That Paul understood the original prophecy as referring to the Gentiles must be maintained by all who admit his logical acuteness, and of course by those who accept his authority as an inspired Apostle. But many apply the words of Isaiah to the Jews, a view which is opposed by the rest of the verse (Isa. 65: 1; 'I said, behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name'), since the privilege of being called by the name of Jehovah was ever cherished by the ancient Jews and the word 'nation' is that used of Gentiles.

Ver. 21. **But as to Israel**; not, 'to,' nor yet, 'against.' The contrast is between 'Israel' and the Gentiles referred to in the prophecy (ver. 20).—**He**, *i. e.*, Isaiah, speaking for God, as in the previous verse **saith** (Isa. 55: 2).—**All the day long did I spread out**,

## CHAPTER 11: 1-10.

*The Rejection of Israel is not Total.*

1 I say then, Did God cast off his people. God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abra-

etc. The order of the LXX. is slightly changed in the citation. 'Spread out,' as one who invites to his embrace, or, even supplicates; this God is represented as doing without intermission, 'the whole day.'—**A disobedient and gainsaying people.** So the LXX., but the Hebrew is simply 'a rebellious people.' Probably 'disobedient' presents the positive, and 'gainsaying' the negative side of the rebellious conduct; or, rebellion is distinguished into refusing God's commands and contradicting His words, disobedience and unbelief acting and reacting upon each other continually. Habitual and continuous conduct is indicated by the form of the Greek. Thus the discussion of the responsibility of the Jews ends: God offered them the gospel, but they would not accept. The universality of the gospel implied the one way of faith; want of faith was the rejection of the universal gospel.

## CHAPTER 11.

3. THE PROSPECTIVE SOLUTION: (I.) THE REJECTION OF ISRAEL IS NOT TOTAL; vers. 1-10. (II.) IT IS NOT FINAL; vers. 11-36.

I. *The Rejection of Israel is not Total, vers. 1-10.*

This section opens with the question ('Did God cast off His people?'), which the whole chapter answers in the negative, and which Paul discusses with a feeling both patriotic and religious (ver. 1). The historical fact in the days of Elijah (vers. 2-4) shows that, now as then, when all seem to have rejected Jehovah. He has still a remnant according to the election of grace (ver. 5), not of works (ver. 6). At the same time the many were rejected (ver. 7), in accordance with the predictions of Isaiah (ver. 8) and David (vers. 9, 10).

Ver. 1. **I say then.** 'Then' introduces the question as a plausible, but incorrect, inference from the entire previous discussion; especially, however, from the Scriptural proof of vers. 19-21.—**Did God cast off his people?** 'Cast off' is preferable to 'cast away;' comp. Ps. 94: 14. 'The Divine act of casting off from Himself is not viewed as the cause (against this is chap. 10: 21), but as the penal consequence, of the disdaining God's loving will' (Meyer). 'His people' refers to the Jewish nation, and the phrase itself 'contains the reason for the denial' (Bengel). Some, however, find here, as in ver. 2, an exclusive reference to the elect among the Jews. So Hodge: 'The rejection of the Jews as a nation was consistent with all that God had promised to their fathers. Those promises did not secure the salvation of all Jews, or of the Jews as a nation.' This view is objection-

2 ham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God did not cast off his people which he foreknew. Or wot ye not what the scripture saith <sup>1</sup>of Elijah? how he pleadeth with

<sup>1</sup> Or, *in*.

able on many accounts: it removes the discussion from the historical point of view to a strictly theological one; it proposes a less natural inference; it uses 'people' in a different sense from that of the preceding verse, and is less suited to the entire discussion than the other view. See further on ver. 2.—**For I also**, etc. The indignant denial is followed by this proof from the Apostle's descent. But what is the nature of this proof? Three views are held: (1.) He is one among many examples ('also') that God had not entirely rejected His people. This is the common one. (2.) His patriotic feeling leads him to deny this indignantly: the proof of his denial follows in ver. 2, etc. This is favored by the detailed reference to his descent. (3.) The restoration of Israel as a nation is so prominent, that 'if such a hypothesis were to be conceded, it would exclude from God's kingdom the *writer himself* as an Israelite' (Alford). But this, however well suited to the thought of the next section, does not suit the immediate context. As between (1.) and (2.), the latter is tenable, if the theocratic idea is included; but the former is on the whole preferable. Weizsäcker well suggests that such an argument proves that the Roman congregation included no large Jewish element.—**Of the seed of Abraham**; to whom the covenant promise was first made.—**Of the tribe of Benjamin**; comp. Phil. 3: 5; this tribe with Judah made up the nation of Israel after the captivity. This does not exclude the patriotic feeling, which has appeared throughout the whole discussion.

Ver. 2. **His people which he foreknew**. Here, too, the reference is to the nation, and not to the spiritual remnant, the elect. If the latter part of the chapter were wanting, this might be the sense. The phrase 'which He foreknew' need not be taken in its individual reference, as in chap. 8: 36, where a plural pronoun is joined with the verb. To limit it to those elected is not only contrary to the sweep of the argument, but to the historical position of the theocratic nation: a foreknowledge resulting in such theocratic privilege is as consistent with the tenor of Scripture as the more individual reference.—**Or wot (know) ye not**. 'Or' introduces a new answer to the question (comp. chaps. 6: 3; 9: 21), namely, the historical case from the **Scripture**.—**Of Elijah**; lit., 'in Elijah.' In the story concerning Elijah; comp. Mark 12: 26: '*in the place concerning the Bush*.' This method of reference is common in Philo and in Rabbinical authors; some instances occur in the classics. The occasion was after the fast of the prophet at Horeb (1 Kings 19).—**How he pleadeth with God against Israel**. This is the object of 'do ye not know.' 'Pleadeth against' is equivalent to complaining of. 'Saying' is an unnecessary addition, supported by few authorities.

3 God against Israel, Lord, they have killed thy prophets,  
 they have digged down thine altars: and I am left  
 4 alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer  
 of God unto him? I have left for myself seven  
 thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to Baal.

Ver. 3. **Lord, they have killed**, etc. This verse is freely cited from the LXX.; 1 Kings 19: 10 (ver. 14 is a repetition of ver. 10). The two clauses are transposed.—**They have digged down**. 'And' is poorly supported.—**Thine altars**. The plural points to the altars as the high places in the kingdom of Israel where Elijah lived. Although it was originally forbidden to erect such altars, they became the only places in Israel where Jehovah was publicly worshipped. Hence, in the time of Elijah, neglect of these was really neglect of worship.—**I am left alone**, or, 'the only one.' The latter rendering corresponds better with the LXX., but is somewhat stronger than Paul's citation. The language of Elijah meant that he was the only prophet left; while the transposition of the clauses suggests here the further notion: I am the only true worshipper of Jehovah. It is not necessary to suppose that the Apostle has departed from the original sense.—**They seek my life**. See 1 Kings 19: 1, 2.

Ver. 4. **But what saith the answer of God**. The word rendered 'answer of God' occurs only here in the New Testament. But in a number of cases the cognate verb occurs, and is usually rendered 'warned of God.' The meaning here is obvious; but the noun first had the sense of 'business,' the formal audience given to an ambassador, then a response from an oracle; this was not the classical sense, but occurs in 2 Macc. 2: 4; 9: 17.—**I have left**, or, 'left remaining,' etc. The citation is from 1 Kings 19: 18, and varies, though not materially, from both the Hebrew and the LXX. The mistake of the latter in reading the verb is corrected by the Apostle. 'Reserved' (A. V.) is inexact. **For myself**; this addition of the Apostle fairly presents the sense of the original: 'as my possession and for my service, over against the idolitrous abomination' (Meyer).—**Seven thousand men**. Probably a definite expression for an indefinite number; 'seven' need not be regarded as significant.—**Who**; of such a kind as, emphasising the faithful character of the men; the Hebrew shows that these were all that remained faithful.—**Have not bowed the knee**; on any occasion.—**To Baal**. The feminine article is used by Paul, while the LXX. has the masculine article. Explanation: (1) An ellipsis, hence the rendering 'to the image of Baal.' The fact that the LXX. sometimes uses the feminine article with the name of the false deity, renders this improbable, and this sense would require a second article with Baal. (2.) This heathen deity was conceived of as of both sexes (androgynous). This is quite probable, but not historically proven. It should be observed, how-

5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. But if it is by grace, it is no more of works: otherwise grace is 7 no more grace. What then? That which Israel

ever, that Astarte (Ashtaroth), the Phœnician goddess, is distinguished from the feminine Baal. (3.) Some regard the feminine as an expression of contempt; but this is the least probable explanation. 'Baal' (signifying lord, ruler) was the sun-god, representing the active generative principle in nature. The greatest idolatrous apostasy among the Israelites was to the worship of this Phœnician deity, and the name occurs in the Old Testament history from the time of Moses to that of Jeremiah.

Ver. 5. **Even so then**, or, 'thus therefore;' in accordance with this historical fact which indicates ('therefore') a permanent principle, **in this present time also**, as well as in the similar ancient times, **there is** (more exactly, 'has become,' and still exists) **a remnant**, a small number out of the mass; and this 'remnant' has become and remains such, **according to the election of grace**. The phrase is to be joined, not with the noun, but with the verb (as above indicated). Here the reference is not national, but individual, as in chap. 9. This view is further sustained by ver. 6, and by the obvious opposition to Jewish pride of works: the election has its source in God's grace, not in man's merit.

Ver. 6. **But if it is by grace**. 'If' takes up the assertion of ver. 5, as if to say: 'since the remnant exists by grace, let us understand what this involves, negatively,' namely: **it is no more of works**. Here the individual reference is clear. 'No more' is logical, not temporal; 'works' are entirely excluded in this matter of the remnant existing according to the election of grace.—**Otherwise**; 'since in that case,' if it were of works, **grace is** (or, more exactly, 'becometh') **no more grace**. 'Becometh,' suggests that in such a case grace would fail to show itself as what it is; 'positively expressed: it *becomes* what according to its essence it *is* not; it gives up its specific character' (Meyer). The emphasis placed at this point on the doctrine of free grace is doubtless to prepare for what follows: the reference to the many rejected (vers. 7-10) as well as the statement of the final solution (vers. 11-32), are based on the sovereignty of God in His dealings.—The latter half of the verse is found in but one of the more ancient manuscripts (B), though it is added by a late corrector in Aleph. Critical judgment has recently become more decidedly against the genuineness of the passage. In addition to the authorities which omit it, the variations of those containing it oppose its retention. If retained it must be regarded as an antithetical repetition of the same thought, since the attempts to discover an additional argument have been futile (comp. the far-fetched views of Lange, Wordsworth and others).

Ver. 7. **What then?** The inference from vers. 5, 6, is intro-



seeketh for, that he obtained not; but the election 8 obtained it, and the rest were hardened: according as it is written, God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not

duced by this question.—**That which Israel** (as a mass) **seeketh** (or, 'is seeking') **for**, now as formerly; chaps. 9: 31; 10: 3 show that 'righteousness' is the object sought. Zealous searching is not necessarily indicated here.—**He obtained not**; did not attain unto; the idea of not finding is not suggested. The connection with vers. 5 and 6 shows that this took place, because the mass of the nation sought the end 'as of works' (chap. 9: 32), a method opposed to 'grace.'—**But the election** ('the remnant,' abstractly and vivaciously termed 'the election,' rather than 'the elect') **obtained it, and the rest were hardened.** 'Blindéd' is incorrect. The word denotes in its primary meaning: 'to deprive an organ of its natural sensibility; in the moral: to take from the heart the faculty of being touched by what is good or divine, from the intelligence the faculty of discerning between the true and the false, the good and the evil. The context will explain how it is possible that a similar effect can be attributed to Divine agency' (Godet). Comp. on chap. 9: 18. God's agency is undoubtedly indicated here (comp. vers. 8-10), but nowhere is this spoken of in a way that implies a lessening of human responsibility. The parenthesis of the A. V. is unnecessary. It is designed to connect this clause with the last one of ver. 8.

Ver. 8. **According as it is written.** The Scripture passages are cited here, because they set forth the principle of Divine action, underlying the statement of ver. 7: 'the rest were hardened,' what had occurred in Old Testament times was not only analogous, but pointed to this punishment of the Jews, the agreement being 'that of prophecy and fulfilment according to the Divine teleology' (Meyer).—**He gave them a spirit of stupor.** The citation is made freely from Is. 29: 10 (LXX.). 'Stupor' (a word found only here) meant first the numbness produced by stupefying wine, the corresponding verb being applied to the paralyzing from astonishment or grief.—**Eyes that they should not see, etc.** This part of the verse is from Deut. 29: 4, freely cited, and joined by the Apostle to the preceding as an explanation; the connection in the original passage being also with 'He gave.' Others find here a further combination with Is. 6: 9, but this is less likely. The clauses 'that they should not see,' 'that they should not hear,' express the purpose of the giving.—**Unto this very day** is a strengthening of the words of Deut. 29: 24, and should be joined with what immediately precedes. The fact that Isaiah repeats substantially what Moses previously said, justifies the application of this principle to the attitude of the mass of the Jews in the Apostle's day. Clearly then, God punishes men by giving them over to spiritual insensibility.

- 9 hear, unto this very day. And David saith,  
 Let their table be made a snare, and a trap.  
 And a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto  
 them :  
 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see,  
 And bow thou down their back alway.

Ver. 9. **And David saith.** The citation is from Ps. 69 : 22, 23, which is attributed to David, in the heading as well as by Paul. Many argue that some parts of the Psalm point to a date after the captivity. But the references to the house of God (ver. 9), the description of the opposers (ver. 8), and other passages, seem to prove that the date was much earlier. The Psalm is a portrayal of the sufferings of the Servant of Jehovah at the hands of spiritual foes, rather than of the sorrows of the exiled Jews. The latter reference gives to the imprecations a national and personal character which seems revolting. The former points to a Messianic fulfilment, and justifies the Apostle's application of the passage. The imprecations of the Psalm are to be considered as the language of an ideal person, representing the whole class of righteous sufferers, and particularly Him who, though He prayed for His murderers while dying (Luke 23 : 34), had before applied the words of this very passage to the unbelieving Jews (Matt. 23 : 38), as Paul did afterwards' (J. A. Alexander).—**Let their table.** In the Psalm the 'table' represents the material enjoyments of life; here it is referred by some to the law, or to the presumptuous confidence the Jews had in it; but it is not necessary to define it so closely.—**Be made a snare;** be turned into this.—**And a trap.** 'The word more usually signified "a hunt," or the act of taking or catching,—but here a *net*, the instrument of capture. It is not in the Hebrew nor in the Septuagint, and is perhaps inserted by the Apostle to give emphasis by the accumulation of synonyms' (Alford).—**And a stumbling block.** This phrase follows the next one in the LXX. The reference to hunting probably led to the transposition.—**A recompense unto them.** Here the Apostle varies slightly from the form of the LXX., which preserves the sense, but not the figure of the Hebrew. In fact this phrase is an interpretation of the entire verse. 'While they think they are consuming the spoils of their earthly sense, they become themselves a spoil to every form of retribution' (Lange).

Ver. 10. **Let their eyes be darkened, etc.** The reference is not to old age, but to some more sudden blinding. This verse explains the 'recompense' of ver. 9. Spiritual blindness is one form of the punishment.—**And bow thou down their back alway.** The Hebrew means: 'make their loins to waver,' but the LXX., here followed closely, presents the same thought under another figure. Present loss of strength is meant, representing spiritual servitude, under the yoke of legalism, rather than that of Roman conquerors.—Meyer thinks the

## CHAPTER 11: 11-36.

*The Rejection of Israel is not Final.*

11 \* I say then, Did they stumble that they might fall? God forbid: but by their <sup>1</sup> fall salvation *is come* unto

\* Begin the paragraph here instead of at ver. 13.—*Am. Com.* <sup>1</sup> Or, *trespass.*

retribution is for want of faith in Christ; Godet, with more reason, says 'the rejection of Jesus by the Jews was the *effect*, not the *cause* of the hardening. The cause—Paul has said clearly enough chap. 9: 31-33)—was the obstinacy of their own righteousness.'

II. *The Rejection of Israel is not Final*, vers. 11-36.

(The division of paragraphs proposed by the *Am. Com.* is much to be preferred.)

In this section is presented the prospective solution of the great historical problem, discussed in this part of the Epistle. Here Paul becomes a prophet; revealing that the rejection of Israel is not final, since the chosen people will be restored.

The section naturally falls into four parts: (1.) The present hardening of so many of the Jews will not result in the final rejection of the nation, but will accomplish two ends: first, the conversion of the Gentiles, and secondly their own restoration, to be 'life from the dead'; vers. 11-15. (2.) In view of this, the Gentiles should not exalt themselves over the Jews, since the restoration of the latter to spiritual blessings is an event both desirable and probable; vers. 16-24. (3.) The Apostle makes known, by revelation, the final conversion of Israel, showing that this is in accordance with prophecy, and with the general principles which underlie God's dealings with men; vers. 25-32. (4.) The thought of ver. 32 leads to a doxology, which forms the climax of the Epistle; vers. 33-36. This doxology forms an appropriate conclusion, first to this section, then to the discussion of chaps. 9-11, and, finally, to the entire doctrinal part of the Epistle.

Ver. 11. **I say then.** Comp. ver. 1. This introduces a possible, but incorrect, inference from ver. 7 ('the rest were hardened').—**Did they stumble that they might fall.** The form of the question points to a negative answer. The fact of stumbling is not, however, denied, since that has been affirmed in chap. 9: 32, 33, nor yet the existence of a Divine purpose ('that' = in order that) in connection with that fact, but as the context shows, the Apostle denies that this purpose was the final fall (*i. e.*, eternal destruction) of the nation. The first 'they' refers to the unbelieving mass of the nation, but the second evidently applies to them as representing the nation as a whole. As individuals they both stumbled and fell, but the design was not that the nation should fall. This view alone accords with the close of the chapter.—**But by their fall**, or, 'trespass.' The word 'fall' suggests a correspondence with the verb 'should fall,' whereas the reference is to 'stumble.' At the same time 'trespass' is not quite satisfactory.—**Salvation**, etc. This was the historical fact, and this fact had as its

12 the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?

13 \* But I speak to you that are Gentiles. Inasmuch

\* See ver. 11.

purpose: **to provoke them to jealousy**, or, 'emulation.' The salvation of the Gentiles was therefore the immediate purpose, but there was a further design, namely, bringing about the final salvation of the Jews by stirring them up to emulation, or, zeal ('jealousy' has a bad sense not implied in the original). This twofold purpose forms the theme of the whole section.

Ver. 12. **Now if their fall is**, etc. 'If' is logical, not conditional; ver. 11 has stated the fact here assumed.—**Their loss**. The word rendered 'loss' means, becoming inferior, suffering defeat. But the contrast with 'fulness' suggests here a numerical sense: the reduction in number of the Jewish people, 'inasmuch, namely, as the unbelieving portion by its unbelief practically seceded from the people of God' (Meyer). The rendering of the R. V. may be taken numerically, or explained as meaning 'impoverishment.' The word cannot mean 'minority,' and this view is otherwise objectionable. The fact that the nation, regarded as the people of God, had been thus reduced proved to be **the riches of the Gentiles**, *i. e.*, thus the Gentile nations were enriched through the gospel preached to them. This is parallel to the previous phrase, 'the riches of the world.'—**How much more their fulness**. 'Fulness' has three senses: (1.) that with which anything is filled; (2.) that which is filled, the state of fulness; (3.) the act of filling. The first sense is most common, and is to be accepted here in the numerical sense (comp. ver. 25): that which fills up the nation to completeness. If the diminution of Israel through unbelief had such a blessed result, how much more their full number when they as a nation become believers. Some find here their full restoration, or blessedness, contrasted with their 'loss.' But this leaves out of view the numerical sense, giving to both the contrasted terms a less obvious meaning, and identifies the thought of this verse with that of ver. 15. The reference to the filling up of the number of the elect is far-fetched. Many fanciful views of the verse have been presented.

Ver. 13. **But I speak to you that are Gentiles**. 'But' is better supported than 'for.' The clause implies the preponderance of Gentile Christians in the congregation at Rome. We do not regard vers. 13, 14 as parenthetical, but as meeting a thought which might arise in the minds of the Gentile readers, namely, that his ministry, as the Apostle to the Gentiles, had no reference to the Jews. He shows that the blessed results to the Jews formed a part of the purpose of his labors (ver. 14). Others think the implied objection re-

then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry: if by any means I may provoke to jealousy *them that are* my flesh, and may save some of them. For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of *them be*, but

lates to the prominence given to the Gentiles in God's purpose respecting the Jews. But it is unlikely that the Gentiles would raise such an objection. Godet differs from both views, and finds in these verses a proof that the Apostle was laboring for the ultimate benefit of the Gentiles by seeking the conversion of the Jews, since the latter would result in 'life from the dead' (ver. 15), and thus bring blessing to the Gentiles. But the first view is to be preferred.—**Inasmuch then**, etc. 'Then' is well supported, and disconnects the clause from what precedes. The clauses should be separated by a colon. Others explain: 'I say to you Gentiles,' inasmuch,' etc. But 'then' opposes this view.—**I am**, etc. 'I' is emphatic here.—**I glorify my ministry**; *i. e.*, his ministry to the Gentiles. 'Glorify' is not = praise, or, magnify; the meaning is, by faithfully discharging the duties of this specific ministry he could do honor to it. The original suggests that there is another phase of the subject, which is stated (though not in exact correlation) in the next verse.

Ver. 15. **If by any means**. Comp. chap. 1: 10. The faithful discharge of his duty to the Gentiles had this as its *attempted* result.—**Them that are my flesh**; comp. chap. 9: 3.—**Save some of them**, *i. e.*, of the Jews. Notice the modesty of the expression, which, however, recalls Paul's ill-success among his own countrymen. This tone opposes the view that he is here apologizing for the mention of the Gentiles.

Ver. 15. **For** introduces the reason for vers. 13, 14: his labor was in view of the more blessed results indicated in the close of this verse—**The casting away of them**, *i. e.*, the exclusion of the Jews through their unbelief, analogous to, but not precisely identical with, 'diminishing' (ver. 12).—**Is the reconciling of the world**. Their unbelief occasioned the preaching of 'reconciliation' (comp. chap. 5: 11) to the Gentiles; many Gentiles were actually reconciled to God, and this was the token of the design and adaptation of the gospel for the whole world.—**What shall the receiving of them be**. The reception to salvation of the Jewish nation as a whole; comp. ver. 12, where the numerical phase of the comparison is brought out. That they would be thus received, is the leading thought of the entire chapter.—**But** (lit., 'if not') **life from the dead**. Evidently the Apostle has in mind something beyond 'the reconciling of the world,' some greater blessing than the gradual conversion of the Gentiles through the gospel, and this he terms 'life from the dead.' Explanations: (1.) The *literal* view: the resurrection from the dead will follow the conversion of Israel. This view has been held by

16 life from the dead? And if the firstfruit is holy, so is the lump: and if the root is holy, so are the

many commentators, both ancient and modern, but with various modifications. Some add to this view speculations of which the Apostle, here at least, gives no hint whatever. Objections: (a.) The use of 'life' not 'resurrection;' the former word often having a wide significance; (b.) the absence of the article before 'life,' which is strange if Paul meant to indicate an event, to which he so often refers; (c.) the lack of evidence from other passages of scripture that the resurrection will immediately follow the conversion of the Jews. The latter event may be closely connected with the final acts of the present dispensation, but prophecy seems to point to other events as intervening. Meyer and others meet some of these objections by including the life which follows the resurrection as its blessed consequence. (2.) The *figurative* explanation refers the phrase to a new *spiritual* life which will be introduced by the conversion of the Jews. To this it may be objected, (a.) that it presents no further thought than the previous 'reconciliation;' (b.) that the language of the remainder of the verse is literal; (c.) that the upholders of this view are not agreed as to what the new and surprising spiritual blessing is, which thus surpasses the present effects of the gospel. These objections, however, do not seem to us as weighty as those to the preceding view. New Testament prophecy does not as yet demand specific interpretation. That a figurative expression might occur here scarcely needs proof. Godet, in accordance with his view of ver. 13, applies this phrase to the blessedness of Gentile Christendom in consequence of the conversion of Israel, while others limit it to the Jews themselves. We prefer the wide reference to the entire body of believers. To combine the two views seems improper, as Meyer affirms, yet his own explanation scarcely differs from a combination of the literal and figurative interpretation.

Ver. 16. **And**, not, 'for' (A. V.). This suggests a reason for expecting this 'receiving' of the Jews, namely, the consecrated character impressed on this people, when they were separated from other nations. This moral necessity for the restoration of the Jews becomes the theme of the remainder of the chapter, both in its warning to the Gentiles (vers. 17-24) and in the positive statements respecting the future of Israel (vers. 25-32).—**The first-fruit is holy.** This is assumed, the reference being to the portion of dough taken as a peace-offering, so that the whole **lump** (of kneaded dough) from which it was taken was thereby consecrated. The first-fruits of the field are certainly not meant. The 'firstfruit,' it is generally agreed, refers to the patriarchs (some limit the application to Abraham), with whom the covenant was made by which Israel became the theocratic people. 'Holy' here means 'consecrated' (comp. 1 Cor. 7: 14), and the underlying argument resembles that of vers. 1-2.—**If the root**, etc. The parallelism leads us to find here the same thought

17 branches. But if some of the branches were broken off, and thou, being a wild olive, wast grafted in among them, and didst become partaker with them <sup>1</sup> of the

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *of the root and of the fatness.*

as in the previous clause, but under another figure, which admits, as the other did not, of an application to the conversion of the Gentiles (so Godet). The attempts to explain the two clauses differently have not been successful, *e., g.*, Christ, the first-fruit; the patriarchs, the root; or Christ, both first-fruit and root; the first-fruit, the believing Jews, and the 'lump' the mass of unbelievers. 'God, in selecting the Hebrew patriarchs, and setting them apart for His service, had reference to their descendants as well as to themselves; and designed that the Jews, as a people, should, to the latest generations, be specially devoted to Himself. They stand now, therefore, and ever have stood, in a relation to God which no other nation ever has sustained; and in consequence of this relation, their restoration to the Divine favor is an event in itself probable, and one which Paul afterwards teaches (ver. 25) God has determined to accomplish' (Hodge).

Ver. 17. **But if some of the branches were broken off.** This was the fact, and the Gentiles are warned against a wrong inference from it. 'Some' does not of itself indicate whether there were many or few; it was, however probably chosen 'in order not to promote Gentile-Christian self-exaltation; ver. 18' (Meyer); comp. chap. 3: 3. The term 'broken off' is that used of the removing of barren twigs.—**And thou,** emphatic and addressed to the individual Gentile believer, **being,** although thou art, **a wild olive,** *i. e.,* a branch of the wild olive tree, since the word here used may be regarded as an adjective. The reference to the tree is objectionable, for the Gentiles are addressed, not as a whole, but as individuals.—**Wast grafted in among them,** or, 'in their place.' Either view is grammatically admissible, but the former is preferable, especially because of the word 'fellow-partaker' which follows, and because 'them' points to 'the branches,' referring to the Jews in general. It is quite improbable that Paul alludes to the custom of renewing the fertility of olive trees by grafting upon them shoots of the wild olive. There is no evidence that he knew of this custom; nor is the illustration furthered by the thought thus suggested. The Gentile scion was to receive, not to impart, fertility. Moreover ver. 24 shows that the Apostle conceives of the matter as taking place through grace and contrary to nature.—**And didst become partaker with them,** *i. e.,* the natural branches, **of the root of the fatness of the olive tree.** Some of our best manuscripts omit 'and,' thus giving the sense as above; but the other reading is also well supported. The former presents the 'root' as the source of the 'fatness,' the vitality and fertility; the latter indicates that the graft is partaker of both. The ideas are substantially identical. As regards the application; it

18 root of the fatness of the olive tree; glory not over the branches: but if thou gloriest, it is not thou that 19 bearest the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, Branches were broken off, that I might be grafted 20 in. Well; by their unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by thy faith. Be not highminded,

is historically true that the Roman and Greek civilization, already decaying in Paul's time, was preserved during the succeeding centuries mainly by the new religious life from the patriarchal root. The unity of the Church in both dispensations is plainly asserted, and this overthrows all the assumptions of an antagonism between Paul and the Twelve, in regard to the relative position of the Jewish and Gentile Christians.

Ver. 18. **Glory not over the branches**, *i. e.*, the people of Israel, not the branches which had been broken off. In ver. 19 the latter are specifically indicated. The warning has never been without an application to us Gentile Christians.—**But if thou gloriest**; the verb is the same as before, and is unusual. We may supply in thought 'against them.'—**It is not thou that bearest the root**, etc. This is the fact which should prevent this disdainful attitude to the Jews. 'The Gentiles had been brought into fellowship with the patriarchs, not the patriarchs with them. Salvation was from the Jews' (Hodge).

Ver. 19. **Thou wilt say then**; despite the last consideration, 'although we are borne by the root of the patriarchs, yet natural branches have been taken away, and their place is now ours.' This has been the presumptuous attitude of too many during all the Christian centuries.—**Branches were broken off**, etc. The article is omitted by the best authorities; the reference is to 'some of the branches' (ver. 17).—**I** is emphatic.

Ver. 20. **Well**. Not necessarily ironical; but an admission of both the fact and the purpose of the breaking off of the branches. The Apostle, however, passes immediately to the cause of this state of things, 'as one which must prevent haughtiness, and inspire fear and anxiety respecting the duration of the state of grace; assigning the reason in ver. 21' (Meyer).—**By their unbelief**. The form is the same as in the other phrase **by thy faith**; the Greek article in each case being equivalent to the possessive pronoun, though both terms may be used abstractly. 'Thou' is emphatic, while **standest** refers to the position as a branch, rather than to standing as opposed to falling.—**Be not highminded**: be not baughty. A few older manuscripts give a slightly different form (answering to that in chap. 12: 16), which, however, must be taken in the same sense.—**But fear**. 'Fear is opposed, not to faith, but to superciliousness and security' (Bengèl). **The reason** is added in ver. 21, with which these clauses should be joined.



21 but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches,  
 22 neither will he spare thee. Behold then the goodness  
 and severity of God: toward them that fell, severity;  
 but toward thee, God's goodness, if thou continue in  
 his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.  
 23 And they also, if they continue not in their unbelief,  
 shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in

Ver. 21. **For if God spared not**, as had been the case, **the natural** (lit., 'according to nature') **branches**, *i. e.*, the Jews who were not ingrafted but original branches of the patriarchal tree, **neither will he spare thee**. The more ancient authorities omit the word rendered 'lest,' which made it necessary to supply 'take heed,' or, 'it is to be feared' (Meyer). Internal grounds may be urged in favor of the longer reading, but the manuscript authority is decisive against it. 'Spare' implies such an attitude in the person addressed as merits condemnation, so that nothing need be supplied.

Ver. 22. **Behold then**. The exhortation of ver. 20 ('Be not high-minded, but fear') is virtually repeated in vers. 22-24, but now as an inference ('therefore') from ver. 21.—**The goodness and severity of God**. The former word is rendered 'kindness' in Eph. 2: 7 and elsewhere; the latter is the inflexible rigor of justice; both refer to the manifestations of God's attributes, rather than to the attributes themselves.—**Toward them that fell**; the unbelieving Jews, the figure of the branches being dropped for the moment.—**Severity**. This word is in the nominative, according to the weightier authorities, and we may supply 'there is.'—**But toward thee, God's goodness**; the nominative is the correct form here also, and the word 'God's' is abundantly supported.—**If thou continue**, etc. This is the common language of warning to Christians; the passage should not be used for or against the doctrines of perseverance, irresistible grace, etc. Moreover the warning is addressed to the Gentiles as *individualized*, not to an individual Gentile.—**Otherwise**, or, 'seeing that *otherwise*,' the last word being implied, not expressed.—**Thou also shalt be cut off**. The word is a strong one, as if the branch were taken off with a sudden stroke of the axe. The warning is for every one of us Gentile Christians, and the wider application seems more appropriate than ever. Should judgment come on what is termed Christendom for its failure to abide in God's goodness, the cutting off will be final; no promise remains as in the case of the Jewish nation; see next verse.

Ver. 23. **And they also**, *i. e.*, the unbelieving Jews, who are like wild olive branches. The verse should not be joined too closely with ver. 22, since it presents a further thought.—**Continue**; the same word as in ver. 22.—**Their unbelief**; as in ver. 20.—**For God is able**, etc. When unbelief ceases, His power will be manifested. It is implied that even when broken off it is easy for God to graft

24 again. For if thou wast cut out of that which is by nature a wild olive tree, and wast grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which are the natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive tree?

25 For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the ful-

**them in again**, as it was to graft in the wild olive branches. The next verse shows that such a result is *more to be expected*, not that it is *easier* for God to do this.

Ver. 24. **For** introduces the entire verse as a proof of the probability that the Jews will ultimately be grafted in again, not of the statement that God is able to graft them in (against Godet). If God's power is in question, it is needless to prove that He could more easily do one thing than another.—**If thou wast**, etc. The fact in the case of the Gentiles is stated under the same figure; **contrary to nature** suggesting, not the greater difficulty, but the antecedent improbability of the fact. All notions of additional life imparted by the grafts are here shown to be foreign to the Apostle's thought.—**How much more shall these, which are the natural branches** (the phrase above rendered 'by nature'), those who sprang from the original patriarchal root. 'In the former case, that of the Gentile, the fact of *natural growth* is set against that of *engrafted growth*: whereas in the latter, the fact of *congruity of nature* ("their own olive tree") is set against incongruity,—as making the re-engrafting more probable' (Alford). The tree is not merely 'their own,' but it is God's; He remembers His covenant. What is here shown by a figure to be probable, the Apostle next declares will certainly take place.

Ver. 25. **For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant**. The Apostle by this form of words introduces something especially important. 'Brethren' is addressed to the whole body of Christians, who were, however, mostly Gentiles. The decisive proof ('for') that the Jews shall be grafted in again (vers. 23, 24) is found in the prophetic announcement now made by the Apostle (vers. 25-32).—**Of this mystery**. In the New Testament the word 'mystery,' does not have the classical sense, but usually refers to a matter of fact, undiscovered by men themselves, which is made known to them by revelation from God. 'Thus it frequently denotes with Paul the Divine counsel of redemption through Christ, as a whole, or in particular parts of it, because it was veiled from men before God revealed it (chap. 16: 25; 1 Cor. 2: 7-10; Eph. 3: 3-5). Whether the contents of a mystery have already become known through the preaching of the gospel, may be gathered from the scope of the particular passages' (Meyer). Here the event revealed is future, hence Paul speaks prophetically, assuming that the

26 ness of the Gentiles be come in ; and so all Israel shall be saved : even as it is written,  
 There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer ;

contents of the mystery were as yet unknown to his readers. He regarded the revealed fact as a very important one, and as standing in intimate relations to the greatest mystery of all : the Personal Christ.—**Lest ye be wise in your own conceits** ; they were in danger of cherishing their own incorrect views in regard to the future of Israel ; the Apostle would prevent this by telling them the truth revealed to him. (There is a variation of reading here which does not alter the sense.)—**That a hardening in part hath befallen** (lit., ‘hath become to’) **Israel**. ‘That’ introduces the contents of the mystery (extending to the word ‘saved’ in ver. 26). ‘Hardening’ (not, ‘blindness’, comp. ver. 7) is preferable to ‘hardness,’ since the process rather than the state is indicated. ‘In part’ is to be joined with the verb, not with ‘hardening’ (as the R. V. seems to suggest) or ‘Israel.’ The ‘hardening’ has been spoken of in ver. 7, but the extent of it is here revealed. This thought would check the pride of the Gentiles.—**Until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in**. This is the second fact revealed, namely, that this hardening (‘in part’) will continue until another event occurs. No other explanation is grammatical ; comp. Luke 21 : 24. Most modern commentators, though differing as to the exact sense of the word ‘fulness,’ agree in referring the phrase, ‘the fulness of the Gentiles,’ to the totality of the Gentiles, not including every individual, but the nations as a whole. It is more than ‘a great multitude,’ denoting rather the great majority. Some refer it to the ‘complement’ from the Gentiles to take the place of the rejected Jews, but this seems unnatural. ‘Come in’ points to their entrance among the people of God, conceived of throughout as *one*.

Ver. 26. **And so** ; in this manner and after this event. This is connected with ver. 25, and is the third and crowning fact of the ‘mystery.’—**All Israel shall be saved**. This statement has been narrowed in many ways (see Lange, *Romans*, p. 370), and on the other hand the obvious sense has been loaded down with notions to which Paul does not allude, here or elsewhere. The view now generally adopted is : that the ancient people of God (so marvellously preserved in their distinctive life, as if in earnest of this) shall be restored, *as a nation*, to God’s favor. As in ver. 25, it is not implied that every individual Jew will be converted ; but probably the proportion will be greater than in the case of the Gentiles, since ‘all’ is more definite. We must also place in connection with this statement, the argument of vers. 12 and 15. But respecting the details of this restoration of the Jews as a body, little has been revealed. The picture is everywhere drawn, only in broad outline. The attempt to fill it out has always produced a reaction, which has opposed even the obvious literal sense of the clause. Luther, Calvin, and others of the reformers denied the reference to the Jewish nation, mainly on dogmatic grounds. Whether

He shall turn away <sup>1</sup>ungodliness from Jacob :

27 And this is <sup>2</sup>my covenant unto them,  
When I shall take away their sins.

28 As touching the gospel, they are enemies for your sake:  
but as touching the election, they are beloved for the

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *ungodlinesses*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *the covenant from me*.

Paul expected this to occur sooner or later does not affect the points revealed; chronological and prophetic nearness are not necessarily identical. The lengthening term of Israel's unbelief presents cumulative evidence that Israel's preservation is to the end that 'all Israel shall be saved.'—**Even as it is written.** There has been much discussion as to the passage or passages here cited, since similar expressions are not infrequent in the Old Testament. The simplest explanation is that the Apostle freely cites from Is. 59: 20, 21, appending a clause from Is. 27: 9 ('when I shall take away their sins'). The variations are not greater than in many other citations. The view that the Apostle merely gives the general sense of many predictions is very objectionable.—The prophecies are introduced to confirm the last statement: 'and thus all Israel shall be saved.' But that prediction is made by the Apostle himself, who here presents a *warrant* for it, not its *ground* (so Tholuck and others).—**There shall come out of Zion.** The Hebrew reads: 'And (or, then) shall come for Zion a Deliverer, and for those turning from apostasy in Jacob.' The LXX. has 'on account of Zion,' which the Apostle changes into 'out of Zion.' The reason for this change is not obvious, but it seems to express more fully the thought so common in Isaiah, that the Deliverer should spring out of Israel. 'The Deliverer' is evidently the Messiah. 'And,' which occurs in the LXX. is omitted here by the best authorities. The second clause refers to the work of the Deliverer, which results in the conversion of Israel.

Ver. 27. **And this, *i. e.*, what follows, is my covenant** (the covenant from me) **unto them.** From the same passage in Isaiah, but the second clause is from Is. 27: 9.—**When I shall take away their sins.** Meyer rightly explains the verse thus: 'And when I shall have forgiven their sins, this (this remission of sins conferred by me) will be my covenant to them (*i. e.*, they will therein have from me the execution of my covenant).' This reference to the taking away of sin was more appropriate to the Apostle's purpose than the promise of the Spirit which follows in Is. 59: 21.

Ver. 28. This verse sums up the previous discussion.—**As touching the gospel.** The two clauses correspond; 'as touching' is more literally 'according to,' *i. e.*, according to the relation of the gospel to believers and unbelievers, offering salvation to them who believe, and proving those who reject it as under the Divine wrath, **they** (the unbelieving Jews, at that time including the mass of the nation) **are enemies.** Not his enemies, nor yet enemies of the gospel, but the

29 fathers' sake. For the gifts and the calling of God  
30 are <sup>1</sup>without repentance. For as ye in time past were  
disobedient to God, but now have obtained mercy by

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *not repented of.*

objects of God's wrath; comp. chap. 5: 10.—**For your sake**; as explained in the previous discussion, see ver. 11.—**But as touching the election.** As regards the fact that Israel was the chosen nation. This is simpler than to take 'the election' as referring to the elect remnant among them, or, to the whole elect church. The former view fails to establish the very point of the contrast, and the latter improperly introduces the Gentiles.—**Beloved, *i. e.*, of God, for the fathers' sake.** This is another statement of what has been indicated throughout; 'they are still regarded with peculiar favor, because descended from those patriarchs to whom and to whose seed the promises were made' (Hodge).

Ver. 29. **For the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance**; not subject to recall. The adjective rendered 'without repentance' occurs elsewhere in the New Testament, only in 2 Cor. 7: 10. This general principle of God's dealings is the basis of the latter half of ver. 28. The fact that God had once bestowed His gifts upon Israel, and called them to become His people, proves, *on this principle*, that they are still beloved for the sake of their fathers. The principle is universal, but here the application is national, hence both 'gifts' and 'calling' are not to be limited to spiritual gifts to individuals, and to effectual calling, or to election. Still less should the former be referred to the Jews, and the latter to the Gentiles. The Jewish nation had special endowments from God, chief among these, or rather the cause of all these, was the calling of the nation as the theocratic people to whom the Messiah was promised. All was in accordance with God's covenant, hence the irrevocableness. In what way this spiritual restoration of the Jews will affect their national life is not stated. God's faithfulness to His covenant is the truth of most practical value.

Ver. 30. **For** introduces statements (vers. 30-32) showing how the course of God's dealings as a whole, to Gentiles and Jews, will establish the principle there announced.—**Ye, Gentiles, in time past were disobedient to God.** That this disobedience was the result of unbelief has been clearly established by the Apostle (chap. 1: 18, etc.), but 'have not believed' is not the sense of the original. 'In time past' points, as usual, to the time before conversion.—**Now**, since they became Christians; comp. Eph. 2: 8.—**Obtained mercy**; all their blessings as Christians are summed up as the result of the mercy of Him to whom they had been disobedient.—**By the disobedience of these, *i. e.*, the unbelieving Jews.** Their 'unbelief' is, however, characterized here as 'disobedience.' How their disobedience became the occasion of the Gentiles obtaining mercy has already been shown.

31 their disobedience, even so have these also now been disobedient, that by the mercy shewn to you they also  
 32 may now obtain mercy. For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all.

Ver. 31. **Even so**; the cases are parallel.—**Have these** (Jews) **also now**, since the gospel of Christ was preached, **been disobedient**; lit., 'were disobedient,' as in ver. 30, but 'now' compels us to render 'have been disobedient.'—**That**, in order that, **by the mercy shown to you** (lit., 'your mercy;' in emphatic position in the original) **they also may now obtain mercy**. The leading thought of the section (ver. 11) is here repeated, in the final summing up. This view is so natural and accords so entirely with the parallelism as to forbid the explanations of the Vulgate, Luther, and others; 'they have not believed in the mercy shown to you,' or, 'were disobedient through the mercy shown to you.'

Ver. 32. **For**. This introduces another general principle of God's dealings. It serves to establish vers. 30, 31, especially the latter, which is but a re-statement of the entire discussion since ver. 11. 'Thus ver. 32 is at once the grand summary and the glorious key-stone—impelling once more to the praise of God (ver. 33 sqq.)—of the whole preceding section of the Epistle' (Meyer), *i. e.*, of chaps. 9-11.—**God hath shut up all**. The verb means 'to shut up' as in a prison (not necessarily 'shut up together'); 'them' is improperly supplied, as if the Jews only were meant. 'All' refers, however, to persons; comp. Gal. 3: 22, where 'all things' occurs.—**Unto disobedience**; comp. vers. 30, 31. This shutting up of all unto disobedience is an *effective*, not simply a *declarative* or *permissive*, activity of God. In the development and punishment of sin—not in its origin—He orders all things so that this result occurs with the further purpose, **that he might have mercy upon all**. This gracious design has already been indicated in vers. 30, 31. 'All' here refers to persons, and is to be interpreted in the light of other passages, particularly Gal. 3: 22. To explain it as meaning 'all nations' is to weaken it; to limit it to the 'elect' is contrary to the parallel, and to the fact that the showing of mercy here on the earth seems to be indicated (so Godet). To refer it to the ultimate salvation of all individuals without exception, is contrary to Gal. 3: 22 (where 'all' is qualified by 'them that believe'), to many other passages, and introduces a mechanical and fatalistic theory of Divine operations. The verse, however, sheds light on the profound mystery of sin. It will be overruled through the more profound and exalted plan for general blessing. The universality of *sin* is overborne by the universality of *Divine grace*; comp. chap. 5: 12 sqq.; 1 Cor. 15: 21, 22. Here this universality is presented mainly with reference to the *proffering* of mercy, not its efficiency. God makes to every one (how we may not always perceive) this proffer, but it is nowhere stated that all men are actu-

33 O the depth <sup>1</sup>of the riches <sup>2</sup>both of the wisdom and  
 the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his  
 34 judgements, and his ways past tracing out! For who  
 hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been  
 35 his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it

<sup>1</sup> Or, *of the riches and the wisdom &c.*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *both of wisdom &c.*

ally redeemed. Belief and unbelief are antithetical, and only through the former is grace accepted. Redemption is not a matter of force, but of freedom; of freedom on God's part as well as man's. And the Apostle by the doxology which follows teaches us to leave what we cannot understand in this matter to the wisdom of this Free Being. We have learned Paul's meaning only when we can join in this ascription of praise.

Ver. 33. **O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!** With Chrysostom and most modern commentators, we prefer the view of the passage indicated in the margin of the R. V. to that given in the text. Either is grammatical; the former, however, is not only more natural, but agrees better with what follows. 'The depth of the riches' may refer to the fulness of God's grace, as shown in the preceding discussion, or be taken in a wider sense, as if to say: 'How superabundantly *rich* is God!' (Meyer). The depth of God's 'wisdom' is in His wise ordering of all the means for His own gracious ends; the depth of His 'knowledge,' in His all-inclusive foreknowledge of ends and means. These constitute an ocean, the depths of which we should ever explore, but can never fathom. In these three words Origen found an allusion to the Trinity (as in ver. 36); but however applicable the terms might be to the attributes of Jehovah manifested by the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it is not proper to assert that the Apostle intended to make any such distinction in this verse. (The second margin of the R. V. suggests an improbable view, connecting 'of God' with the word 'knowledge' only.)—**How unsearchable**, etc. The discrimination between 'wisdom' and 'knowledge' seems to be implied here; **judgements** are the decisions (not exclusively judicial) of God's wisdom, according to which He acts; these are 'unsearchable.'—**His ways**, the general modes of procedure, in accordance with His infinite knowledge, are 'untraceable;' the adjective, from the word meaning 'foot-print,' is aptly used with 'ways.' Precisely because this is true, God is an inexhaustible Object for our minds as well as our hearts.

Ver. 34. **For who**, etc. The Apostle here uses, almost exactly, the language of Is. 40: 13; but by adding 'for,' he makes it the confirmation of what precedes. The first question may be referred to God's 'knowledge' and 'His ways,' since no one **hath known the mind of the Lord**; the second to His 'wisdom,' and 'judgments,' since in forming His decision no one **hath been his counsellor**.

Ver. 35. **Or who hath first given**, etc. This is from Job 41:

36 shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him *be* the glory <sup>1</sup>for ever. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *unto the ages.*

11. follows the Hebrew, not the mis-translation of the LXX. This question refers to the depth of God's riches. No gift can recompense God: nothing can be purchased of Him. How appropriate to the entire discussion. The gospel is all of grace; the plan respecting Jews and Gentiles is all of grace. Nothing of merit or recompense; all freely bestowed out of the ocean depths of riches in God Himself.

Ver. 36. **For.** What was negatively expressed in ver. 35, is now positively stated in language which is as simple as it is sublime.—**Of him**, as the original Source, Author, Creator: and **through him**, as our Preserver and Governor and Bountiful Benefactor, as superior to nature which He created, controlling and directing it, and that for His own ends, since the Apostle adds: **and unto him, are all things.** All things (not simply all persons) will carry out His will, will contribute to His glory. Human thought can rise no higher than this. Attempts have been made to refer the three phrases respectively to the three Persons of the Trinity, but the second and third prepositions do not seem distinctly applicable to the Son and Holy Spirit. Nor does the train of thought demand such an explanation.—**To him be the glory forever** (Gr., 'unto the ages'). **Amen.** The glory befitting such a God is here ascribed to Him; 'unto the ages' is, as usual, equivalent to 'forever;' and the doxology properly closes with the solemn 'Amen;' comp. chaps. 1: 25; 9: 5. This doxology is 'the sublimest apostrophe existing even in the pages of Inspiration itself' (Alford). Yet how logical its arrangement, how apt its argument. It forms a conclusion to the section, and not less appropriately to the whole discussion in chaps. 9–11, in fact, to the whole doctrinal part of the Epistle. The greatest treatise on God's dealings with men ends, not only with praise to Him, but with a confession of His sovereignty. This which so exalts God does indeed humble us. But it is through this humility that we too are exalted. The gospel of *grace* would be no real gospel were it not the message of the *sovereign* God whom the Apostle thus adores. He only has practically solved the mystery of God's sovereignty and our free will who can join in this doxology. It is our privilege, in regard to the great mysteries of humanity as well as in the personal perplexities which meet us, it is our privilege to trust and praise God, when we can no longer trace His purposes. As Godet well remarks, 'in chap. 11 are traced the grand outlines of the philosophy of history,' but Paul's philosophy of history ends in this conception of God, which is as essential for our every day needs as for the solution of the problem of man's origin, history and destiny. Rightly then the Apostolic 'therefore,' the practical inference, is at once added. Unless Paul's theism is acknowledged, and his praise repeated, his ethics are powerless.



## CHAPTER 12: 1-8.

*Practical Theme: Duties According to Special Gifts.*

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies

*PRACTICAL PART. CHAPTERS 12-16.*

MAN'S GRATITUDE FOR FREE SALVATION.

The theme of this part of the Epistle is given in chap. 12: 1: The believer saved by Christ through faith is to present himself a thank-offering to God; all Christian duty is praise for deliverance. For convenience we may divide this portion as follows:—

I. GENERAL EXHORTATIONS; based directly upon the theme; chaps. 12, 13. (Strictly speaking, chap. 13: 1-7 forms a special discussion, see below and *in loco*.)

II. SPECIAL DISCUSSION regarding the scruples of certain weak brethren, who abstain from eating meat, etc.; chaps. 14: 1-15: 13.

III. CONCLUDING PORTION: personal explanations, greetings to and from various persons, with a closing doxology; chaps. 15: 14-16: 27.

## CHAPTERS 12, 13.

## I. GENERAL EXHORTATIONS.

In these two chapters the Apostle gives exhortations respecting Christian duties, based upon the controlling obligation to present ourselves a living thank-offering to God. Godet distinguishes these precepts as pertaining respectively to the *religious* (chap. 12) and to the *civil* sphere (chap. 13). We prefer to divide into sections as follows: (1.) Practical theme: duties according to special gifts; chap. 12: 1-8. (2.) Duties for all Christians in personal relations, springing from brotherly love and extending to returning good for evil; chap. 12: 9-21. (3.) The Christian's duty to earthly rulers; chap. 13: 1-7. (4.) General exhortation to love, and to a Christian walk; chap. 13: 8-14. The thoughts are linked to each other rather than arranged by a formal method. Other divisions readily suggest themselves, but this will prove as convenient as any other.

1. *Practical Theme: Duties According to Special Gifts, vers. 1-8.*

The theme is fully stated in vers. 1, 2; then follows an exhortation to humility (vers. 3-5), which introduces the special reference to various gifts, mainly, but not exclusively, official in their nature (vers. 6-8).

Ver. 1. **I beseech** (or, 'exhort') **you therefore, brethren.** The connection is undoubtedly with the conclusion of chap. 11; but for this very reason the practical inference is from the entire doctrinal part which culminated in that passage. 'Beseech' is not a word of legal command, but an appeal addressed to Christians whose hearts, it is assumed, will respond to the motives on which the appeal is based. 'Brethren,' as frequently before. The notion that Paul would not thus exhort the Christians of a church he had not founded, is altogether unsupported. Renan and others, by disputing the place of

of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy,  
<sup>1</sup>acceptable to God, *which is* your <sup>2</sup>reasonable \* <sup>3</sup>service.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *well-pleasing*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *spiritual*.

<sup>3</sup> Or, *worship*.

\* For *reasonable*, read *spiritual* with marg. Gr. *belonging to the reason*.—*Am. Com.*

chaps. 12, 13 (and 14) in this Epistle, reveal an entire misapprehension of the Apostle's character. The man who really *believes* what is contained in chaps. 1-11 could not fail to exhort thus.—**By** (lit., 'through') **the mercies** (or, 'compassions') **of God**; as summed up in chap. 11: 35, 36, but expounded in the former part of the Epistle. These are called to mind to furnish the motive for obedience to the exhortation; 'as if any one wishing to make an impression on one who had received great benefits, were to bring his Benefactor himself to supplicate him' (Chrysostom). 'He who is rightly moved by the *mercy* of God, enters into the entire *will* of God' (Bengel).—**To present**. The word is used of bringing for sacrifice. It points to a single act, not to a continued process, to the thankful bringing once for all of the offering, not to sacrificing it.—**Your bodies**. This cannot be referred to the body as the seat of sin. It is either a designation of the entire personality, chosen to suit the figure of a sacrificial thank-offering, or the body is specially referred to as the organ of practical activity, the instrument by which the living to God is to manifest itself. There is no objection to the view that this is 'an indication that the sanctification of Christian life is to extend to that part of man's nature which is most completely under the bondage of sin' (Alford). Meyer takes the term literally here, and in ver. 2 another reference, 'so that the two verses *together* contain the sanctification of the whole man distributed into its parts,—that of the outer man (set forth as the offering of a sacrifice), and that of the inner (as a renewing transformation).' But the phrase 'reasonable service' seems to oppose this distinction, and there are other objections.—**A living sacrifice**; over against the Levitical offerings, which were to be slain. We indeed die to sin, but live unto God (comp. chap. 6 throughout).—**Holy, acceptable to God**; these terms qualify 'sacrifice.' This offering is 'holy,' morally pure over against the ceremonial purity of the Levitical offerings, as well as in opposition to the previous devotion to sin; it is 'well-pleasing to God,' as 'a savor of a sweet smell' (comp. Eph. 5: 2), since such an offering is not only based upon the expiatory offering of Christ, but is well-pleasing to God, whose will is our sanctification, as the Apostle declares in his earliest Epistle (1 Thess. 4: 3).—**Which is your reasonable (spiritual) service**. This explains the whole clause: 'to present,' etc. 'Service' is used of religious service, or worship. The contrast undoubtedly is with the Old Testament ritual service. That of the new covenant, just described, is characterized as 'belonging to the reason' (*Am. Com.*, marg.), which seems to be nearly equivalent to 'spiritual' (1 Pet. 2: 5), over against the external, fleshly service (*opus operatum*). The term here used brings out this contrast better than 'spiritual,'

2 And be not fashioned according to this <sup>1</sup>world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is <sup>2</sup>the good and <sup>3</sup>acceptable and perfect will of God.

<sup>1</sup>Or, age.   <sup>2</sup>Or, the will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect.  
<sup>3</sup>Gr. well-pleasing.

which might improperly suggest that the Old Testament service was in itself fleshly, in the ethical sense. Godet explains: 'the service which answers in a rational manner to the moral premises established in the faith you profess.' But the phrase refers to a service *rendered* by the reason rather than one *demanding* by the reason (comp. Sanday). 'A Mosaic sacrifice might be a purely mechanical offering, in which the intelligence had no part. But the sacrifice required from us, since it is our own body, can be offered only by the act of the reasonable spirit within' (Beet). In any case, the true Christian service is one of self-dedication to God; only this is well-pleasing to Him.

Ver. 2. **And be not.** Some of the best authorities give the infinitive (not the imperative) form in this verse, thus connecting it closely with 'beseech' (ver. 1). The tense used points to continued action.—**Fashioned according to.** The words rendered 'conformed' and 'transformed' (A. V.) have different derivations; the former refers more to the outward form (the noun is usually rendered 'fashion'), the latter to the organic form. Some deny such a distinction in this instance, but it is well to reproduce the verbal variation in English.—**This world,** or, 'age;' comp. Gal. 1: 4; Eph. 2: 2. The phrase is used in a bad sense.—**But be ye transformed,** or, 'transfigured,' as in Matt. 17: 2; Mark 9: 2 (the same word occurs in 2 Cor. 3: 18). Here also a continuous process is indicated.—**By the renewing of your mind.** This is the instrument of the transformation. The 'mind' (comp. chap. 7: 23, 25, and Excursus), or, practical reason, is naturally under the dominion of the flesh; it needs renewal, which is wrought by the Holy Spirit, faith being the subjective element of its operation. Through this renewed mind there results the transformation in the whole man. The passive suggests the agency of the Holy Spirit, while the exhortation implies moral freedom.—**That ye may prove,** or, 'in order to prove,' to put to the practical test, **what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.** Not simply to be able to do this, but actually to do so, the conscience being continually educated by the Holy Ghost. The inward renewal has as its result an increasing delicacy of judgment in Christian ethics, the will of God respecting our conduct in the world. The practical portion of this Epistle is designed to help to this judgment. The marginal rendering is, on the whole, preferable. The other view compels us to take 'acceptable' in the sense of agreeable to men. What God wills is that which is 'good,' in its end, 'well-pleasing' to Him, and 'perfect' as uniting these two. As a practical,

3 For I say, through the grace that was given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to  
4 each man a measure of faith. For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have  
5 not the same office: so we, who are many, are one

matter, what is God's will in our particular circumstances is determined by the renewed mind prayerfully seeking what is good and well-pleasing and perfect.

Ver. 3. **For I say.** 'The special *requirement* which he is now to make serves in fact by way of *confirmation* to the general exhortation of ver. 2' (Meyer).—**Through the grace that was given me.** He thus refers to his apostleship, as he often does; humbly making an appeal for the humility he enjoins.—**To every man that is among you;** applying the precept to each and all without exception.—**Not to think of himself,** etc. There is a play upon words in the original which it is difficult to reproduce in English: Alford renders 'not to be highminded, above that which he ought to be minded, but to be so minded as to be sober-minded.'—**But so to think as to think soberly,** or, 'so as to be sober-minded.' Some would render, 'but to be so disposed as to be sober minded;' but the reference to thought of one's self is preferable. The aim of one's self-knowledge should be wise discretion. Practically self-esteem leads to indiscretion.—**According as God,** etc. This clause qualifies the last one: 'to think so as,' etc.—**To each man a measure of faith.** The article is wanting before 'measure,' but probably it refers to the particular measure in each case. 'Faith' is here subjective, as usual; and the entire phrase points to the individual Christian's 'receptivity of grace of the Spirit, itself no inherent congruity, but the gift and apportionment of God. It is in fact the subjective designation of the grace which is given us; ver. 6' (Alford). This clause prepares the way for the specifications which follow (vers. 6-8) which show that the 'measure of faith' is different in degree in different cases, and adapted to peculiarities of character. Since this standard is 'as God hath dealt to each one,' there is no room for thinking too highly of ourselves.

Ver. 4. **For even as we have many members in one body.** The parallel here set forth (vers. 4. 5) is more fully carried out in 1 Cor. 12: 12, etc. In Ephesians (throughout) the unity is emphasized, here the variety. This variety is introduced as an explanation of the variety in the measure of faith, and hence as a motive for the humility enjoined.—**Have not the same office,** or, 'activity, *e. g.*, eyes, ears, hands, etc.

Ver. 5. **So we who are many,** not, '*being many,*' but, 'the

body in Christ, and severally members one of another.

6 And having gifts differing according to the grace that

many,' like the many members of the body, are one body in Christ. A common figure.—And severally, etc. The phrase is very unusual; it is literally: 'and what (is true) as to individuals, (they are) members of one another.' Christ is the Head, and fellowship with Him makes us one body, and in consequence the individual relation is that of fellow-member with every other.

Ver. 6. **And having gifts**, or, 'having however,' etc. Some would connect this verse grammatically with 'we are' (ver. 5), but it seems better to begin a new sentence here, and to supply the proper imperatives, as is done in the A. V. The construction in the Greek is irregular, whatever explanation be given. 'But' makes an advance in thought: 'and not only so, but' (Alford). 'Then' is misleading.—**Gifts differing**, etc. The 'charisms' are different, but all having one origin, according to the grace that was given to us. This is the same thought as that of ver. 3: 'according as God hath dealt,' etc. Seven of these differing 'gifts' are named, and made the basis of a corresponding exhortation. Four of these seem to be official gifts (though not pointing to four distinct and permanent orders in the ministry), the last three probably being 'charisms,' with which no special official position was connected. The reasons for making this distinction are: omission of 'or' with the fifth clause; the difficulty of referring the remaining gifts to official persons; the change in the admonitions, which do not define the sphere as before, but the mode. Furthermore, we might expect exhortations to private Christians after the reference to 'all the members' in vers. 4, 5. (See on the several clauses.)—**Whether prophecy**. This is the first 'gift' named. In the Bible 'prophecy' on the one hand, includes more than the prediction of future events, it is a speaking *for* God not merely *beforehand*; on the other hand, it is not identical with preaching. In the New Testament the reference is to the gift of immediate inspiration, for the occasion, 'leading the recipient to deliver, as the mouth of God, the particular communication which he had received' (Hodge). It would appear from the statements in the Book of Acts and in I Corinthians, that the gift was not unusual, and that the possessor of it had an official position. The office of the Old Testament prophet became more and more prominent in the period of the Old Dispensation, but in the New, which presents a gospel of fact, the gift was not permanent, though needful in the Apostolic times and held in the highest esteem (comp. I Cor. 14: 1). It differed from the ecstatic speaking with tongues. This view of the gift opposes any attempt to introduce it into modern discussions about church offices.—**According to the proportion of our faith**, lit., 'the faith.' But the term is not equivalent to a body of doctrine; comp. chap. 1: 5. There is not an instance in the New Testament usage up to the time when the Apostle wrote, which requires such a

was given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* 7 according to the proportion of <sup>1</sup>our faith; \* or ministry, *let us give ourselves* to our ministry; or he that 8 teacheth, to his teaching; or he that exhorteth,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *the faith.*

\* Omit marg.<sup>1</sup>—*Am. Com.*

sense. (Hence the *Am. Com.* prefer to omit the margin as misleading.) 'Faith' here means the subjective 'believing,' and 'our faith' is as appropriate as 'our ministry' in ver. 7. The entire phrase, with which 'let us prophesy' is properly supplied, is equivalent to 'measure of faith.' This view is favored by the context, 'which aims at showing that the measure of faith, itself the gift of God, is the receptive faculty for all spiritual gifts, which are therefore not to be boasted of, nor pushed beyond their provinces, but humbly exercised within their own limits' (Alford). The technical theological sense, 'the analogy of faith,' seems quite inappropriate here, where an extraordinary gift of prophecy is referred to, and has been abandoned on lexical grounds by the vast majority of more recent commentators (except Philippi, Hodge, and Shedd). That this sense has been used against grammatical exegesis is a matter of history. The simple meaning is: even when a man is thus occasionally inspired, let him use his gift, as he has faith; the gift of faith limits the gift of prophecy. 'The inward inspiration and the outward deliverance must keep pace, and advance step by step together. Preaching in which the proportion is not observed is sure to become rhetorical or insincere' (Sanday).

Ver. 7. **Or ministry.** The second gift. Some refer this to all the permanent offices of a single church, taking the five following terms as included under it. The change of construction in the next clause slightly favors this view, but it cannot be positively established. The usual view refers it to the *diaconate* (which the Greek term may mean), namely, the gift of oversight of the external affairs of the church.—**Let us give ourselves to our ministry,** lit., 'in the ministry,' just spoken of. The R. V. fairly expresses this sense. We might supply, 'let us be,' since the exhortation means, let us render service in our appointed sphere, therein 'be instant' (comp. 1 Tim. 4: 15). It has happened ever since those who had a gift, and a corresponding office, for the external affairs of the church, have not been content to limit their efforts to their proper sphere.—**Or he that teacheth, to his teaching,** lit., 'the teaching,' his sphere. This refers to the gift of teaching by ordinary methods and need not be limited to any special office. Paul was himself a teacher. This gift is a permanent one, and cannot be too highly prized; the danger now as then, is the possessor's mistaking his gift, or stepping outside of the sphere for which it adapts him.

Ver. 8. **Or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting,** lit., 'the exhortation,' which is his sphere. 'Teaching' was directed to the understanding; 'exhortation,' rather to the heart and will. The ex-

to his exhorting: he that giveth, *let him do it with*<sup>1</sup> *liberality*; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *singleness*.

horter might also be a prophet, but the habit seems to have been to base the exhortation on a passage of Scripture, as in the synagogue (comp Acts 13: 15). It is impossible to find here any permanent office in the church, though these four were probably the basis of a subsequent development into more permanent official positions.—**He that giveth**, or, 'imparteth,' **let him do it with liberality**, lit, 'singleness.' This should be referred to all who have the 'gift' of imparting; private Christians as well as the official almoners of the Church. It does not mean the imparting of spiritual benefit, but of earthly goods. This is a 'charism' which many may have, who can do little else for Christ's cause. He who thus gives should do it 'with singleness,' *i e.*, 'without any selfishness, without boasting, without secondary designs, etc., but in plain sincerity of disposition' (Meyer). The rendering of the R. V. is defended by many, on the ground that the other qualifications referred to outward character, rather than to the frame of mind. But this sense of the Greek word is very unusual, and the exhortation to simplicity seems both appropriate and needful. Liberal giving is far easier than simple giving.—**He that ruleth**, or, 'presideth,' **with diligence**. That this 'gift' was necessary for the presbyter (the ruler, or, bishop) of the church, is quite evident. But since the preceding and subsequent clauses point, either to private Christians, or to the deacons, an exclusive reference to the office of presbyter seems out of place. 'Diligence' should characterize the performance of duty by all those who have the gift of leadership. The explanation: 'he that entertaineth strangers,' is unsustained by good evidence.—**He that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness**. This also refers to all Christians who administer help and comfort to the suffering. Here there is great danger of rendering perfunctory service, hence the appropriate exhortation 'with cheerfulness.'—The three 'gifts' which private Christians also have might far more frequently be exercised. Too many who could do great service by giving, presiding (or, performing other executive duty), and showing mercy, waste their energies by attempting to exhort and teach, or even to prophesy. Let each prayerfully consider what his special gift is.

The hints given here and elsewhere in the Epistles do not support any one theory of church polity. This whole matter seems to have been in process of development during the Apostolic age. Of fixed and binding usage there is little trace. The Apostle says little, because so much was to be left to the free enactment of the various bodies of Christians. The true way to unity will doubtless be through liberty, and to liberty the freedom of association is essential; and to, freedom of association variety of form seems, for the present at least to be equally essential.

## CHAPTER 12: 9-21.

*Exhortations for all Christians, in Personal Relations.*

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which  
10 is evil; cleave to that which is good. In love of the  
brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another; in  
11 honour preferring one another; in diligence not sloth-

2. *Exhortation for all Christians, in their Personal Relations, from Love of the Brethren to returning Good for Evil, vers. 9-21.*

(The R. V. does not begin a paragraph here.)—All the precepts of this section are based upon Christian love (ver. 9). After exhorting that this love be without hypocrisy, and noting the moral attitude it produces, the Apostle gives special injunctions respecting its various active manifestations. He begins with tenderness toward the brethren (ver. 10), and names many ways in which Christian love outwardly manifests itself (vers. 11-13, 15, 16), culminating in its treatment of those who are opposed to us and have injured us (vers. 14, 17-21).

Ver. 9. **Let love** (lit., 'the love') be. The imperative form is to be supplied, there being no verb in the Greek. The participles which follow are to be explained accordingly. This is unusual, but not ungrammatical; since in vers. 16-19 this construction recurs. The article points to the Christian grace they already possess, and 'your love' would not be an incorrect rendering.—**Without hypocrisy**; comp. Jas. 3: 17. This brief clause is the title of the entire section.—**Abhor that which is evil**, etc. Christian love will manifest itself in this abhorrence of what is morally evil and permanent adherence to what is morally good. (It is not necessary to restrict the adjectives to what is injurious and what is kind.) 'Let your love arise from genuine and deep emotion; let the basis of your character be an intense hatred of evil and as strong an adhesion to God' (Sanday).

Ver. 10. **In love of the brethren**. Here also the article occurs, implying that this is already possessed. 'In' is properly supplied, but the exact sense is 'with respect to.' The A. V. inverts the emphatic order of the Greek in these clauses.—**Be tenderly affectioned one to another**. The word is that applied to family affection, and is properly chosen in view of the new and peculiar relation of Christian brethren.—**In honour preferring one another**. Meyer explains: 'going before as guides,' *i. e.*, with conduct that incites others to follow. Stuart: 'in giving honor, anticipating one another.' The former is probably more in accordance with usage; but 'in honor going before one another' would suggest the reverse of humility, hence we do not alter the inexact rendering of the A. V. Godet paraphrases: 'making them in all circumstances pass in advance of yourselves.'

Ver. 11. **In diligence not slothful**. This is the emphatic order throughout, but it is restored only here in the R. V. 'In dili-



12 ful; fervent in spirit; serving <sup>1</sup>the Lord; rejoicing  
 in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing stedfastly  
 13 in prayer; communicating to the necessities of the  
 14 saints; <sup>2</sup>given to hospitality. Bless them that per-

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *the opportunity*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *pursuing*.

gence' (the same word as in ver. 8). not, 'in business;' in whatever Christian duty requires your diligence, do not be slothful.—**Fervent in spirit.** The figure is that of seething, boiling like a hot spring; hence the human spirit is meant, but the regenerated human spirit, since Christians are addressed. This clause is opposed to mere animal excitement in our diligence; the spirit itself must be stirred.—**Serving the Lord.** Some ancient authorities, by a variation of two letters (*κατρω* for *κυρω*) sustain the reading of the R. V. marg. This means: in one's daily task adapting one's self to the occasion, to the circumstances of the hour, with the self-denying discretion of true love. Aleph, however, decides in favor of the other reading. The variation can readily be accounted for. The objection that so general a precept is inappropriate here is invalid. It is characteristically Pauline to insert a distinctively Christian motive in his minute exhortations. In whatever we find to do we are not only to be active, but to have a spiritual enthusiasm, which is prompted by the knowledge that all our doing, however humble, is in the service of Christ.

Ver. 12. **Rejoicing in hope**, or, 'in hope, rejoicing.' The hope, *i. e.*, the thing hoped for, is the ground rather than the object of the joy.—**Patient** (stedfast, as usually) **in tribulation.** This clause follows, probably because the Christian's joyous hope produces endurance in affliction.—**Continuing stedfastly in prayer.** Neither joy nor endurance is abiding without such constant prayer.

Ver. 13. **Communicating to the necessities of the saints;** taking part in these necessities as your own; hence relieving them. 'Communicating' is inexact, as also in Gal. 6: 6; comp. 15: 17, where the verb occurs in the same sense as here. (Some manuscripts present a curious variation in this clause, substituting for 'necessities' a word which refers to the days consecrated to the commemoration of martyrs; apparently an intentional corruption of the text.) All Christians are included under the term 'saints.'—**Given to hospitality**, lit., 'pursuing hospitality.' This virtue is frequently enjoined in the New Testament, and was especially necessary in those days, when Christians were persecuted and banished. The early Church responded to the precept. 'He does not say, *practising*, but *pursuing*, teaching us not to wait for those that are in need, but rather to run after them and track them out' (Chrysostom). While this presses the sense of the word, it is a fair inference.

Ver. 14. **Bless them that persecute you**, etc. 'The saying of Christ, Matt. 5: 44, was perhaps known to the Apostle, and here

15 scute you ; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them  
 16 that rejoice ; weep with them that weep. Be of the  
 same mind one toward another. Set not your mind  
 on high things, but <sup>1</sup>condescend to <sup>2</sup>things that are

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *be carried away with.*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *them.*

came to his recollection' (Meyer). It is quite unlikely, however, that he had read the Gospel of Matthew. The Sermon on the Mount was, doubtless, well known through oral transmission, and there are allusions to it in the Epistles (chap. 2: 19; 1 Cor. 7: 10; Jas. 4: 9; 5: 12; 1 Pet. 3: 14; 4: 14). The word rendered 'persecute' is the same as that in the last clause of ver. 13; an intentional play on words. Probably the change of form to the imperative shows how difficult a duty this was felt to be. 'How hard this is for corrupt human nature, every one who is acquainted with his own heart well knows. Yet this is the standard of Christian temper and character exhibited in the Scriptures' (Hodge). Hardest of all is the duty when the persecutor is a professed Christian brother.

Ver. 15. **Rejoice with them**, etc. The infinitive occurs in the original, and we may paraphrase: '*it is necessary, to rejoice,*' etc. 'Ver. 14 defines the proper conduct in relation to personal *antipathy*; ver. 15, the proper conduct in relation to personal *sympathy*' (Lange). The verse is not interjective, nor is the exhortation weaker. Sympathy is not less difficult than forgiveness. The latter is less active than the former, and may exist when the range of Christian feeling is too limited for wide and quick sympathy. But forgetfulness of self is the basis of both virtues.

Ver. 16. **Be of the same mind**, etc. The participial form recurs, but the force is still imperative. This precept refers to concord in feeling, though not to the exclusion of corresponding thought and endeavor.—**Set not your mind on high things.** The verb is the same as in the previous clause (lit., 'minding the same; minding not the high things'). This may be taken as a general warning against ambition, or 'high things' may refer to the distinctions which arise among Christians whether social or official, and which are so naturally sought after. The latter view accords with the common rendering of the next clause.—**But condescend to** (be carried away with) **things that are lowly.** It is difficult to decide whether the last phrase is masculine or neuter, the same form being used for both genders. Meyer accepts the latter and explains: 'yielding to that which is humble, to the claims and tasks which are presented to you by the humbler relations of life;' he cites Paul's example, as tent-maker and sufferer. The neuter occurs in the previous clause, but the adjective is masculine in all other instances in the New Testament, and the next clause favors the reference to persons. (So A. V., R. V. marg., Godet, Sanday, Brown.) This is closely connected with the other precepts, for such self-sufficiency in judgment usually attends ambition,

17 lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits. Render to no man evil for evil. Take thought for things honour-  
 18 able in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much  
 19 as in you lieth, be at peace with all men. Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto <sup>1</sup>wrath:\* for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will

<sup>1</sup>Or, *the wrath of God.*

\* Let marg.<sup>1</sup> (*the wrath of God*) and the text exchange places.—*Am. Com.*

and serves to foster the aristocratic feeling, which, as Godet intimates, the Apostle opposes throughout this verse. Nothing destroys Christian fellowship more effectually than this conceit of wisdom.

Ver. 17. **Render to no man evil for evil.** The proper treatment of those opposed to us was spoken of in ver. 14, and from this point is the sole topic of the section. 'No man' who injures us, whether Christian brother or one without, so in ver. 14. The Apostle 'knew only too well by experience, that in the bosom of the Church itself one could encounter malevolence, injustice, jealousy, hate' (Godet). The principle is plain, but the temptation to disobey is often very strong.—**Take thought for things honourable in the sight of all men.** The A. V. is misleading, conveying to the ordinary reader the thought that we are bidden to provide for ourselves and our families in an honest way. 'In the sight of all men' is to be joined with the verb, not with 'honorable.' Man's estimate of what is 'honorable' is not the standard; but all should see that our effort is for what is 'honorable.' Hodge finds here the motive for the preceding exhortation: 'let a regard for the honor of religion and your own character prevent the returning of evil for evil,' but the connection is not obvious. The care for things honorable might serve to dispossess the desire for retaliation.

Ver. 18. **If it be possible, as much as in you lieth; not, 'if you can,' but if it be possible, if others allow you to do so, be at peace with all men.** That this is sometimes impossible, the Apostle's life shows; but our responsibility extends as far as our ability to keep the peace.

Ver. 19. **Avenge not yourselves, beloved.** The Greek order is properly restored; the address becomes more affectionate, in order to press lovingly the more difficult duty.—**But** (or, on the contrary) **give place unto the wrath of God** (so *Am. Com.*). This seems to be the only sense consistent with what follows. Let God's wrath take its course, do not attempt to execute it yourself; comp. our Lord's conduct, as described in 1 Pet. 2: 23. So most commentators, but a variety of untenable explanations have been given: 'defer your own wrath,' a Latinism, and not the meaning of Paul's language; give place to the wrath of your enemy, either by letting him have his will, or by getting out of its way; neither of them suited to the context, or

20 recompense, saith the Lord. But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.  
21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

in harmony with the tone of the passage. Alford refers it to anger in general, without adding anything to the correct interpretation. 'The morality of this precept is based on the holiness of God; hence so far as love and wrath are the two poles of holiness, it does not exclude the blessing of our adversaries (ver. 14) and intercession for them' (Meyer).—**For it is written** (Deut. 32: 35), **Vengeance belongeth unto me** (lit., 'to me is vengeance'); **I will recompense** (a strengthened form of the word used in ver. 17), **saith the Lord** (a formula naturally added by the Apostle). The Hebrew is: 'Mine is revenge and requital;' the LXX. reads: 'in the day of vengeance I will recompense.' In Heb. 10: 30, the form is the same as here, which suggests that it had become usual, especially as it occurs in the paraphrase of Onkelos.

Ver. 20. **But**, *i. e.*, 'on the contrary,' 'nay rather' (Alford). The authorities present several variations; but the oldest manuscripts and more recent editors accept 'but.'—**If thine enemy**, etc. The rest of the verse corresponds exactly with Prov. 25: 21, 23 (LXX.) and is adopted by the Apostle without a formula of citation. The only difficulty is in the last clause; **thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head**. Explanations: (1.) Thou wilt thus leave him to severer Divine punishment. This is opposed by the next verse, and contrary to Prov. 24: 17. (2.) Thou wilt prepare for him the glowing shame of penitence; so Augustine, Meyer, Godet, and many others. This is not open to any serious objection, if real penitence be understood. Simply to make him ashamed is not an exalted motive. (3.) Thou wilt by this kindness most readily subdue him, thus taking the most effectual vengeance; so Alford, Hodge, and others. This really includes (2), and is favored by the next verse. Tyndale's gloss is: 'This means that thou shalt kindle him and make him to love.' Besides these, a number of fanciful interpretations have been suggested.

Ver. 21. **Be not overcome of evil**, *i. e.*, injury done you, **but overcome evil with good**. This sums up the entire matter respecting the treatment of adversaries: When we requite evil for evil, we are overcome, when we return good for evil, we overcome it. So Christ did on the cross. When we do this, we achieve the greatest victory of love: we win by yielding; we gain by giving; we avenge by forgiving; we conquer by forgetting ourselves so as to return good for evil. 'Men whose minds can withstand argument, and whose hearts rebel against threats, are not proof against the persuasive influence of unfeigned love; there is, therefore, no more important collateral reason for being good, than that it increases our power to do good.' (Hodge.)

## CHAPTER 13: 1-7.

*The Christian's Duty to Rulers.*

1 Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers: for there is no power but of God; and the powers

3. *The Christian's Duty to Rulers*, vers. 1-7.

This exhortation has seemed to many out of place, since in ver. 8 the precepts resume their general character, and the connection with what proceeds is not obvious. Some have found this connection in the persecuting character of the state; others discover an apologetical design; others again find reasons for the exhortation in the special circumstances of the church, while Godet thinks that the Apostle 'after having shown the Christian consecrating his body to the service of God, places him successively in the two domains in which he should realize the sacrifice of himself: that of *spiritual life* properly so termed, and that of *civil life*.' He includes vers. 8-10 in this section. But admitting this, we may yet find an occasion for the exhortation, and one, moreover, which serves to connect it with the closing thought of the last chapter. The Jews in Rome had been banished from the city for a time by the Emperor Claudius (A. D. 51) on account of their turbulent spirit. This turbulence was doubtless the result of the political character of their Messianic expectations. Nowhere would such a result be more pronounced than at Rome, and the Christians there though not Jewish, could scarcely fail to be more or less affected in the same way. (This view is, however, opposed by Weiss.) It is no reproach to them to assume that they had not yet understood what many, even now, do not recognize, namely, that the freedom of the gospel is primarily spiritual, out of which, by degrees, in the appointed way, a reformation and transformation of civil relations should proceed. Moreover, the character of the imperial rulers was such (Nero was then Emperor), that the exhortation was only a specific application to the precept: 'overcome evil with good' (chap. 12: 21). By obedience to this exhortation, under such rulers, the Church of Christ won her moral victory over the Roman empire and heathendom. When she exalted herself to rule, instead of humbling herself to obedience, her weakness began.

The course of thought is simple: The duty of obedience to rulers and its motive in the divine appointment (vers. 1, 2); another motive, from the salutary design of government (vers. 3, 4); the two thoughts combined (ver. 5), and the principle illustrated from the universal paying of taxes (ver. 6), then applied in a detailed exhortation (ver. 7).

Ver. 1. **Let every soul**; every human being, but with reference to the life of the 'soul,' rather than of the 'spirit,' the former being the common life of the subject of a state.—**Be in subjection**, or, 'submit himself.' The latter rendering suggests that the obedience is of a voluntary and rational character, not a servile and blind subjection. **To the higher powers**, or, 'the authorities which are over him.' 'Authorities' is a more exact rendering and accords better with the use of the singular in the next clause. Political rulers are undoubtedly meant, and most probably all such, of every rank; the exclusive reference to the higher class of rulers being very doubt-

2 that be are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves

ful.—**For there is no power** (or, ‘authority,’ of any kind, the proposition being universal) **but of God.** The preposition, according to the received reading is more exactly ‘from;’ according to the better established text, ‘by.’ The former indicates that there is no authority apart from Him as the source; the latter, that authority is established by Him. This general proposition is applied in the next clause, which gives the motive for obedience to the preceding exhortation.—**The powers that be;** or, ‘they that exist.’ The word ‘powers’ is not found in the best manuscripts and is rejected by modern editors. The reference here is to existing civil authorities, *de facto* governments, which the Apostle asserts, **are ordained of God.** The simple, pellucid meaning of the Apostle, is that civil government is necessary, and of Divine appointment. We infer that anarchy is as godless as it is inhuman; magistrates derive their authority from God, even when chosen by the people. This principle, moreover, respects the office, not the character of the ruler. But as the obedience is demanded because of God’s appointment, there inheres this limitation, that obedience is not demanded in matters contrary to God’s appointment. When the civil power is most directly under the control of the popular will, the personal responsibility of Christian citizens is greatest: to the duty of obedience are added those of political knowledge and prudence. Unfortunately these ‘rights’ are too frequently recognized more clearly than the duties; and history proves plainly enough that popular government, *when, and only when the people are permeated by Christian principle,* contains in itself the preventive of revolutionary excess.

Ver. 2. **Therefore** (as a result of the principle just stated) **he that resisteth** (or, ‘setteth himself against’) **the power,** that particular existing authority, to which he should submit himself. (There is a play upon the words in the Greek which cannot be reproduced in English).—**Withstandeth,** or, ‘opposeth;’ not the same word as before, though the A. V. renders both ‘resisteth.’—**The ordinance of God.** The word ‘ordinance’ corresponds with ‘ordained’ (ver. 1).—**They that withstand shall receive to themselves judgement,** or, ‘condemnation.’ The former is more literal, but the latter sense is evidently implied. ‘Damnation’ is incorrect, since it suggests future eternal punishment, which is not meant here. But the ‘judgment’ is from God, since it is His ‘ordinance’ which is withstood. That the rulers are instruments in inflicting the Divine punishment is indicated in vers. 3, 4, but the punishment may come in other ways. ‘Paul reproduces here in a certain sense, but in another form, the saying of Jesus (Matt. 26: 52): “All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.”’ (Godet.)

3 judgement. For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: for <sup>1</sup>he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for <sup>1</sup>he beareth not the sword in

<sup>1</sup> Or, it

Ver. 3. **For rulers** (lit., 'the rulers,' as a class), etc. Some connect this with ver. 1, as an additional reason for obedience, namely, the salutary design of government; others find here the ground for the last clause of ver. 2. The former accords better with the fuller statements of vers. 3, 4.—**Not a terror to the good work**, etc. 'The good work' and 'the evil' are personified. 'Beyond the *work*, and to the *intention*, the prerogative of the magistrate does not extend' (Meyer). If this verse gives a reason for the last clause of ver. 2, then 'good work' and 'evil' must be limited to obedience and resistance; which seems objectionable.—**And wouldest thou**, etc. The clause may be taken as hypothetical: 'Thou dost not wish,' etc.—**Thou shalt have praise from the same**. In thus presenting an ideal of civil government, the Apostle gives the reason for obedience to rightful authority, and establishes a principle of general validity. But the ideal itself suggests that when rulers become a terror to the good work, another maxim can have place, that of the Apostles (Acts 5: 29): 'We must obey God rather than man.' Nero had not yet shown his true character, when this Epistle was written. Even he persecuted the Christians as alleged evil-doers.

Ver. 4. **For he is a minister of God to thee for good**. This is a purpose for which civil government was ordained of God (the word 'God' is in emphatic position). By the fulfilment of this purpose the relative excellence of forms of government may be determined. It is an empirical test, and does not assume that there is a *jure divino* form. The verse presents a confirmation of ver. 3: 'Dost thou then wish,' etc.—**Be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain**. 'Beareth' habitually 'the sword;' is not the dagger of the emperor and his prefect, but the curved sword of the provincial Roman magistrates, which moreover was borne before them in public processions as a symbol of their right to punish with death.—**An avenger for wrath**, etc. The magistrate is God's minister, not only for good, but in this respect also; he is 'an avenger for wrath,' it is his office to punish evil, to vindicate those who have been wronged (comp. Luke 18: 3-8), for the execution of the Divine wrath, which is here named to strengthen the force of the argument. The theory of civil penalty here involved includes more than efforts to restrain and reform the criminal. The Apostle undoubtedly here asserts the *right* of capital punishment. He is describing an ideal of civil government, and this right has been and will be abused, to the extent that the State falls

vain: for <sup>1</sup>he is a minister of God, an avenger for  
 5 wrath to him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must  
 needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath,  
 6 but also for conscience sake. For for this cause ye  
 pay tribute also; for they are ministers of God's ser-

<sup>1</sup> Or, #

below this ideal. But the right remains; fully justified by the theory of punishment here advanced, and by the necessities of self-preservation on the part of society represented by the punishing power. Moreover, the right to punish also implies the right to pardon; and the measure of the right (*i. e.*, the conformity to the ideal here presented) will be also the measure of the sense of responsibility, both as to the punishing and pardoning power. The usual objections to capital punishment misapprehend, both the nature of punishment in general, and the Divine authority in civil government.

Ver. 5. **Wherefore ye must needs, etc.** In accordance with what has been stated ('wherefore'), the necessity of obedience rests, not only on grounds of prudence, **because of the wrath**, but on moral grounds, **but also for conscience' sake**; obedience is a religious duty.

Ver. 6. **For for this cause ye pay tribute also.** This clause is indicative, not imperative (though the form in the Greek admits of either sense). The fact of tribute-paying was universal, and 'for' seems to introduce a reason for this fact, rather than a motive for an exhortation. The connection is more doubtful. Some join 'for this cause also' with vers. 1-4, making this verse parallel with ver. 5, as the statement of another result of the Divine appointment. Others, with more propriety, connect it immediately with ver. 5, finding here a result of the necessity there stated, as well as a confirmation of it. But, as that verse is an inference from what precedes, this view implies a reference to the entire discussion. 'For' introduces the fact of paying tribute as a proof that obedience is due for the reasons assigned in ver. 5. 'Also,' suggests the correspondence with other acts of obedience. 'As a proof that it is necessary to obey for these two reasons (ver. 5), I adduce from among the duties prompted by these reasons ("for this cause") one ("also") universally performed, namely, the paying of tribute.'—**For they** (*i. e.*, the magistrates) **are the ministers of God's service.** The emphasis rests on the word rendered 'ministers,' which is a stronger one than that used in ver. 4. It belongs to a class of words applied to the temple service of the Jewish priests. Our word 'liturgy' is derived from the same term. 'Accordingly, those who rule, in so far as they serve the divine counsel and will, and employ their strength and activity to this end, are to be regarded as persons whose administration has the character of a divinely consecrated *sacrificial service*, a *priestly nature*' (Meyer).—**Attending continually upon** (lit., 'for') **this very thing.** Go-



vice, attending continually upon this very thing.  
 7 Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is  
*due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear;  
 honour to whom honour.

det joins 'for this very thing' with the preceding clause, but this seems forced. 'This very thing' may refer, either to the payment of taxes, or to the entire 'ministry' of the magistrates. The wider thought of ver. 7 favors the latter view, which is preferable for the further reason that the participle, 'attending continually,' suggests a moral idea. 'You pay taxes because they are necessary to maintain rulers, and it is necessary to maintain rulers because of the nature of the office, as ministering servants of God, whose constant duty it is to be a terror to evil-doers and a praise to those who do what is beneficial.'

Ver. 7. **Render to all their dues.** The weight of evidence is against the word 'therefore,' which would readily be inserted, since we have here an inferential exhortation. Some connect this verse with the next section, in view of its general statements; but it is a summing up of what precedes, and at the same time a transition to the more general admonitions which follow. 'All,' in this view, refers to all kinds of rulers, though the principle is applied in the next section to all persons.—**Tribute** etc. 'Is due' is properly supplied in English, the Greek construction being elliptical. 'Tribute' is a direct tax on person or property.—**Custom** is a toll, or duty, on goods.—**Fear . . . honour.** If the reference is to rulers, the former is to be applied to the proper sentiment and conduct toward the higher magistrates, especially judges, the latter to magistrates in general. Alford applies honor 'to all on whom the State has conferred distinction.' If the wider reference is accepted, 'fear' means the reverence paid to superiors; honor, the courtesy due to equals. This is a fair inference, but the more limited application seems preferable. As regards the present application of the section, a variety of opinion obtains. Views: (1.) That the Apostle's exhortation has no application to our time, when Christianity is the governing principle of the civilized world. Here the premise is only partially true, and the conclusion not warranted by the premise, if true. (2.) That passive obedience to civil power is the invariable rule for Christians. This is a mechanical conception of the Apostle's position, and opposed by considerations drawn from the New Testament itself. Moreover, where any branch of the government represents the people, the duty of opposing the rulers by constitutional means is a virtual denial of the theory of non-resistance. (3.) The correct view seems to be that the principles here laid down are of universal application, but that such application has of necessity its limitations and variations. The ideal of civil government here presented affords on the one hand abundant reason for obedience to rightful authority, and yet on the other makes room for Christian resistance to rulers who utterly and entirely depart

## CHAPTER 13: 8-14.

*General Exhortation to Love, and to a Christian Walk.*

8 Owe no man any thing, save to love one another: for he that loveth <sup>1</sup>his neighbour hath fulfilled <sup>2</sup>the law.

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *the other*.

<sup>2</sup> Or, *law*.

from this ideal. But the Christian's duty is to obey, until the duty of resistance is clearly proven. Such obedience has led to civil freedom, and consists with the highest spiritual freedom. When rendered on the principle here laid down, it continually asserts that the higher law is the basis of the lower authority, and thus tends to elevate the State toward the Apostolic ideal. This ideal of the Apostle neither confounds Church and State, nor places them in antagonism, but properly coördinates them in Christian ethics. Romanism subordinates the State to the Church, usually placing them in antagonism. Erastianism subordinates the Church to the State, usually confounding them. Puritanism also confounded them, but with more of acknowledged theocratic principle. Godet well says: 'The essence and origin of the two societies are different, their administration should remain distinct.'

4. *General Exhortation to Love, and to a Christian Walk*, vers. 8-14.

The more general exhortation of ver. 8 seems to have been suggested by the thought of obligation which underlies ver. 7: fulfil all obligations; but the universal one, which can never be fully discharged, is that of love to one another. The ground of this obligation, as the fulfilment of the law, is then discussed (vers. 9, 10) A motive is introduced, drawn from the approaching day of the Lord (vers. 11, 12 *a*), which is made the basis of further exhortations to a corresponding Christian walk (vers. 12 *b*-14).

Ver. 8. **Owe no man any thing.** On the connection of thought, see above. The clause is undoubtedly imperative, and the meaning is very wide, including to all possible obligations to every human being, and not to be limited to a caution against pecuniary indebtedness.—**Save to love one another.** This is an exception which is not an exception. 'Owe' in the first clause refers to external obligations, but from the nature of the case the obligation referred to in the second clause is a moral one, the apprehension of which will grow with exercise. The more we love, the more we will feel the claims of love. This obligation can never be paid; hence here we must 'owe,' but we must here most faithfully attempt to discharge our obligations.—**For he that loveth.** This clause shows that the previous one was a command to love, irrespective of our inability to discharge the growing sense of obligation.—**His neighbour**, lit., 'the other,' the other one who is loved, in the given case.—**Hath fulfilled the law.** 'In and with the loving there has taken place what the Mosaic law prescribes, namely, in respect of duties toward one's neighbor' (Meyer). Love is

- 9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: love therefore is the fulfilment of <sup>1</sup>the law.
- 10 And this, knowing the season, that now it is high time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is <sup>2</sup>salva-

<sup>1</sup> Or, law.<sup>2</sup> Or, our salvation nearer than when &c.

more than a performance of the single precepts of the law, it is the essence of the law itself. 'Nor is it possible to find for human life, amid all the intricate mazes of conduct, any other principle that should be at once as simple, as powerful, and as profound' (Sanday). The context (vers. 9, 10) plainly shows that the Mosaic law is meant, while the whole Epistle excludes any idea of justification as based on this fulfilment. The Apostle is writing to those who love, *because they are justified*.

Ver. 9. **For this**, etc. Four out of the five commandments in the second table of the law are cited. The received text inserts the ninth commandment also, but on insufficient authority. The seventh commandment here precedes the sixth, as elsewhere in the New Testament (Mark 10: 19, received text; Luke 18: 20; Jas. 2: 11). The same order occurs in some MSS. of the LXX; and Paul may have followed these. The tenth commandment is given in brief form. It forbids the most frequent cause of a violation of the rights of others. Only the second table is recalled, because duties to our neighbor are under discussion.—**If there be**, etc. This includes the omitted commandment, whether Paul had this in mind or not.—**Summed up**. The Greek word answers exactly to our word 'recapitulate,' to bring together *again* under one head. Comp. Eph. 1: 10.—**This word**; a term applied to the commandments.—**Thou shalt love**, etc. The commandments were more than prohibitory, as this recapitulation by Moses plainly showed; see marginal references also.

Ver. 10. **Love worketh no ill to his neighbour**, lit., 'the neighbor.' Alford: 'All the commandments of the law above cited are *negative*: the formal fulfilment of them is therefore attained, by *working no ill* to one's neighbor. What greater things love works he does not now say.' Paul's further comments on this thought may be found in 1 Cor. 13: 4-7 (Meyer).—**Love therefore is the fulfilment of the law**. A repetition of the proposition in ver. 8, after its truth has been demonstrated (vers. 9, 10). 'Fulfilment' is a more accurate rendering than 'fulfilling' (A. V.).

Ver. 11. **And this**. It is not necessary to supply anything; the sense is: and ye should the rather do this, *i. e.*, 'love one another' (ver. 8), as afterwards expanded.—**Knowing the season**; since ye

tion nearer to us than when we *first* believed. The night is far spent, and the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on

know the season. What this means is then explained: **that now it is time**, etc.—**For you**. The received text has ‘us,’ which does not appear in the A. V., but the oldest authorities support ‘you,’ which is the subject of the following infinitive.—**To awake out of sleep**; it is already time that you should awake out of sleep. Meyer joins ‘already’ with the infinitive clause, which seems unnecessary. Since this exhortation is addressed to Christians, ‘sleep’ must be taken in a relative sense, and explained of ‘the state of worldly carelessness and indifference to sin, which allows and practices the *works of darkness*. The imagery seems to be taken originally from our Lord’s discourse concerning His coming: see Matt. 24: 42; Mark 13: 33, and Luke 21: 28–38, where several points of similarity to our vers. 11–14 occur’ (Alford).—**For now** (not the same word as before) **is salvation nearer to us** (or, ‘is our salvation nearer’) **than when we first believed**. This is the motive for the preceding exhortation. Of the renderings we give, the former is favored by the order of words in the original. ‘First believed’ is a correct paraphrase, indicating the single act of faith with which the Christian life began. ‘Salvation’ is regarded by most of the recent commentators as referring to the second coming of Christ. Others object to this view on the ground that it implies a mistaken expectation on the part of the Apostle, as well as because either the word ‘coming,’ or, ‘appearing,’ would be used, if that were the sense. The latter objection is not of much weight, since the word ‘salvation’ often has a future reference, and in the Apostle’s mind the blessedness of the future was intimately associated with the coming of the Lord. Further, even if Paul had a personal hope that the Lord would soon return, that did not interfere with his so writing that his teaching corrected the errors of others, because it was itself inspired. *He himself knew that he could know the time*; and therefore he could not, and did not, teach any error on this point. Indeed, the very statements which are used to prove that he had this expectation prove even more clearly their own adaptation to the needs of the waiting Church. They have been literally true in their application to Christians for centuries. On this great subject the Apostle taught the truth, as well as rebuked error. But Stuart, Hodge, and others, maintain quite strongly the exclusive reference to the deliverance from present evil, the consummation of salvation for the individual believer in eternity. Undoubtedly we must accept such an application and press it as a motive, but the other view seems to be the correct one.

Ver. 12. **The night is far spent**, etc. The figure here must be interpreted in accordance with the view taken of ‘salvation’ (ver. 11). ‘The night’ is primarily the period up to the Advent, the approach of which is indicated: **the day is at hand**. Of course there are other applications; ‘the day will break a hundred times, in ever greater

13 the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

potencies, between the first and the second coming of Christ' (Lange). But it is fanciful to refer 'the night' to the spiritual condition of heathen Rome, and 'the day' to Christian Rome.—**Let us therefore cast off**, as one casts off his clothing, **the works of darkness**, works done in darkness, as their characteristic moral element; comp. Eph. 5: 11.—**Let us put on the armour of light**. Spiritual light is the possession of the believer; he is exhorted to put on the armor which properly belongs thereto. His clothing is not for luxury, or show, but for a conflict (comp. Eph. 6: 13). The 'armor' represents principles, modes of action, rather than the resulting good deeds.

Ver. 13. **Let us walk honestly** (or, 'seemly'), **as in the day**. Both 'honestly' (A. V.) and 'decently' (A. V. margin) are too limited, the reference being to decorum, such as befits the day when conduct is open to observation.—**Not in revelling and drunkenness**. The former refers to nocturnal revels, and was probably suggested by the figures of 'night' and 'day;' the latter means drunken carousals; both are plural in the original.—**Not in chambering and wantonness**. Various forms of secret vice are here indicated by the plural. These sins are closely connected with the preceding, often caused by them. In Gal. 5: 19; Eph. 4: 19 and elsewhere, the word rendered 'wantonness' occurs, but is rendered 'lasciviousness.' It points to an abandoned sensuality.—**Not in strife and jealousy**. These follow in the train of sensuality, as Roman life was then testifying most sadly. ('Envy' is inexact.) The entire family of vices is well-known, and the relationship obvious. 'It is interesting to know that this verse, happening to catch the eye of St. Augustine, had a great effect in leading to his baptism and change of life' (Sanday).

Ver. 14. **But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ**. In Gal. 3: 27 the putting on of Christ is represented as a finished fact (in principle), but here the exhortation is to a continuous duty. In both cases vital fellowship is meant, but each step in the growing conformity to Christ is a new putting on of Him, so that we present Him, not ourselves, in our conduct.—**And make not provision for the flesh**, etc. There are two views of this passage. (1.) 'Flesh' is taken in the strictly ethical sense; the meaning will then be: make no provision whatever for the flesh (the depraved nature), so as to fulfil its lusts, and also because such provision would fulfil them. In favor of this may be urged, the emphatic position of 'flesh' in the original; its usual sense in this Epistle, and the contrast with putting on Christ Jesus. (2.) Flesh is understood in its physiological sense, the material of the body, which is the source and seat of sensual desires. The

## CHAPTER 14: 1-12.

*Fraternal Duty in the Case of the Weak Brethren.*

1 But him that is weak in faith receive ye, *yet* not <sup>1</sup>to

<sup>1</sup> Or, *for decisions of doubts.*

sense then is, make such provision for the flesh, as shall not fulfil its lusts. The position of the word 'not' in the original favors this view, but it is otherwise open to grave objections (comp. Weiss against Meyer).

## CHAPTERS 14: 1—15: 13.

## II. SPECIAL DISCUSSION RESPECTING THE SCRUPLES OF CERTAIN WEAK BRETHREN.

This part of the Epistle was occasioned by the existence at Rome of a class of Christians who had scruples in regard to eating meat and drinking wine, and who clung to the observance of the Jewish festivals. Whatever may have been the origin of such a class (see below), the result was that these judged their less scrupulous Christian brethren, who in return looked upon them with contempt. The Apostle's exhortation, while addressed mainly to the stronger brethren, who constituted the great majority of the Church, lays down a principle of universal validity in regard to differences of opinion among Christians on *practical points* not inconsistent with common faith in Christ, and hence not essential to salvation. The passage may be, for convenience, divided into three sections: (1.) Exhortation to reciprocal forbearance and regard, mainly addressed to the weak; chap. 14: 1-12: (2.) Proper use of Christian liberty, on the part of the stronger brethren; chap. 14: 13-23. (3.) More general treatment of the subject, passing over into expression of Christian praise; chap. 15: 1-13. The entire passage is 'at the same time the first step in the return from the form of a *treatise* to that of a *letter*'; it forms, in consequence, the transition to the epistolary conclusion of the entire writing' (Godet). This is important in its bearing upon the question respecting the place of chaps. 15, 16 in the Epistle.

**THE WEAK BRETHREN AT ROME.** The scruples of the weak brethren were respecting eating flesh, drinking wine and the non-observance of the Jewish festivals. The result of these scruples, as indicated by the Apostle's exhortation, gives no certain clue to their origin. But the tone of the exhortation shows that Paul did not regard these brethren in the same light as he did the Judaizing teachers in Galatia, the errorists in Colossæ, or even the weak brethren at Corinth (1 Cor. 8 and 10). He speaks of and to them in a mild and persuasive way entirely different from his language against false teachers. We must therefore consider them as men with weak ascetic prejudices, rather than as legalists, or antipauline Judaizers. The persons referred to in 1 Cor. seem most closely allied in opinion to these, but at Rome the scruple does not appear to have been confined to meat offered to idols. They were not Jewish Christians who wished to retain the law, but it is probable that they were mainly of Jewish origin. Scrupulousness about meat offered, and wine poured out, to idols, may have led to entire abstinence from meat and wine, or even from all food which in their view others might have rendered unclean in their preparation of it. Possibly

## 2 doubtful disputations. One man hath faith to eat all

this asceticism was due to Essenic influences; but it could scarcely have been derived from the schools of heathen philosophy. Godet discovers an attempt to return to the vegetarian rule of the antediluvian age. The entire discussion shows profound insight respecting human character, and the adaptation of the principles laid down to social Christian life in all ages has been again and again proven. Unfortunately ecclesiastical bodies have too often made deliverances on matters of minor morals which overpass the limits here set to bearing the infirmities of the weak. The attempt to make men holy by ecclesiastical law has always failed; no other result is possible, since the law of Moses proved powerless to sanctify.

1. *Fraternal Duty in the Case of the Weak Brethren*, vers. 1-12.

The exhortation to receive the weak (ver. 1); the difference between the strong and the weak in the matter of eating (ver. 2), with admonitions to these classes respectively (ver. 3), especially to the weak brother, who judges (ver. 4); the difference respecting the observance of days (ver. 5); the Christian attitude of both classes in their different conduct (ver. 6), based upon the common relation to Christ our Ruler (vers. 7-9); a warning to both classes in view of the accountability to God as a Judge (vers. 10-12).

The caution about judging is prophetic: more divisions and discords have arisen in the Church from the questions here referred to, about which the Apostle has given no authoritative decision, than from the discussion of the truly weighty matters of the previous chapters, in regard to which he speaks so positively. Neglect of distinctively Christian truth is often joined with pettiness in Christian ethics.

**Ver. 1. Him that is weak in faith.** (See note above.) The phrase might be rendered 'in his faith,' since faith in Christ is meant, not Christian doctrine, or, moral conviction, or knowledge. The latter ideas are implied; for in the cases referred to the faith did not have its practical result in moral discernment and conviction in regard to what properly belonged to a life of faith.—**Receive ye**; do not reject or discourage him, but count him one of your number, in fraternal fellowship. This exhortation suggests that the weak brethren were in a small minority.—**Yet not to doubtful disputations**, lit., 'unto decisions of thoughts.' This clause is addressed to the stronger brethren, who formed the great majority of the church. While they receive the weak brother, it should not be in such a way as to produce this result, that his thoughts (in this case the scruples named in vers. 2, 5, etc.) are criticised and judged. To refer it to both parties is opposed by the form of the sentence. The word 'thoughts' here refers to doubts, but does not itself mean this. Godet explains: 'debates consisting in vain reasonings.' But the former word means decisions, or discriminations of judgment, while 'thoughts,' though usually having a bad sense in the New Testament, never mean vain reasonings. Lange's view: 'not to the judicial decision of motives,' though a proper inference, is lexically indefensible.

**Ver. 2. One man**; as in ver. 5. 'For' is not found in the original.—**Hath faith to eat all things.** 'Believeth' is literal, but the reference to 'faith' throughout makes this paraphrase necessary.

3 things : but he that is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth set at nought him that eateth not ; and let not him that eateth not judge him that eateth : for 4 God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest the <sup>1</sup>servant of another ? to his own lord he standeth

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *household-servant*.

One has a confidence resulting from faith which permits him to eat every kind of food. This is the first point of difference, and the position of the majority naturally comes first.—**But he that is weak eateth herbs.** (See above.) This is best taken in its exact sense ; the scruple was such that only vegetables were eaten. Even bread, prepared by others, may have been deemed unclean. But there may have been a variety of usage among the weak brethren. Such believers are apt to differ among themselves, as well as with their stronger brethren.

Ver. 3. **Let not him that eateth set at nought** (as in ver. 10) **him that eateth not.** ‘The self-consciousness of strength misleads into looking down with *contempt* on the weak’ (Meyer). Against this so natural tendency the Apostle cautions ; in the latter half of the chapter, the duty of the strong is more fully explained.—**Judge him that eateth.** The weak brother fails to comprehend the liberty of the stronger one ; his misjudgment leads to false judgment, namely, in *condemning* the person whose conduct he fails to reconcile to the scruples of his weak faith. The reference is not to *doctrinal* differences, but to practical Christian ethics.—**For God hath received him.** ‘Did receive him’ is more literal, pointing to the time when fellowship in Christ began. This clause gives a reason for not judging (comp. ver. 4), though some would refer it to both the preceding prohibitions. But it is far more pertinent to the weak brethren, since they are apt to excommunicate, withdraw from fellowship on trivial grounds of external observance, thus rejecting him whom God received. The strong do not reject, but, while tolerating, are prone to despise the weak.

Ver. 4. **Who art thou that judgest ?** Comp. chap 9 : 20. Evidently addressed to the weak brother, rather than to both classes.—**The servant of another.** The ‘household servant’ (see marg.) was more closely connected with the family than the other slaves, and in those times often the recipient of great and special favors from a powerful master.—**To his own lord.** ‘Lord’ is preferable to ‘master,’ to indicate the correspondence with the correct reading of the last clause of the verse, and also to suggest the evident reference to Christ.—**He standeth or falleth.** The judgment of the weak would exclude the stronger brother from his place as a Christian (ver. 3), hence it is most natural to explain this phrase of the continuance or non-continuance in the daily fidelity of a true Christian life. To refer it to God’s final judgment seems less in accordance with the context, where Christ’s power, not His grace, is spoken of. The passage implies, that God only is the



or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand; for the  
 5 Lord hath power to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let each man be fully assured in his  
 6 own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord: and he that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, unto the

Lord of the conscience, but that is not its primary meaning.—**He shall be made to stand; for the Lord** ('his own Lord,' namely, Christ) **hath power to make him stand.** The argument is still addressed to the weak brother, who condemns the stronger one, thinks he must *fall*, if he exercises such freedom. But the Apostle asserts: the standing and falling concerns Christ who is his master, and Christ who is able, will make him stand in his daily Christian faith and life.

Ver. 5. **One man esteemeth one day above another;** lit., 'judges day above day;' distinguishes one day from another, the reference probably being to the Jewish feasts or fasts. This is a second point of difference, but not so prominent as the first, which is emphasized throughout. The occasion of offence would be more frequent in the matter of eating and drinking.—**Another esteemeth every day alike;** lit., 'judgeth every day.'—**Let each man be fully assured in his own mind.** He does not say 'spirit,' but, 'mind;' the practical reason is to be exercised in the decision of matters of personal duty; the full conviction of an *educated* conscience should be sought for, not fancied spiritual intuitions.

Ver. 6. **He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord.** However weak his faith, 'he who directs his carefulness to the day, exercises this carefulness in his interest for the Lord, namely, in order thereby to respond to his relation of belonging to the Lord' (Meyer). So far as the scruples lead to conduct with this *Christian* tone, they appeal to the kind tolerance of those who are conscious of greater freedom.—The clause: 'and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it,' is omitted by the best authorities, and rejected by most modern editors. It was probably inserted to complete the antithetical form of the passage: though some who retain it are disposed to think it was omitted because it seemed to be against the observance of the Lord's day and Christian holidays. As regards the latter, the Apostle's principle is against compulsory observance, but the Lord's day has other claims than those of Jewish or Christian festivals. The presence of the Fourth Commandment in the Decalogue, the recognition (and explanation) of the obligation to keep the Sabbath by our Lord, as well as the relation of the law to the Christian life, suggest for the observance of the Lord's day a higher sanction than is afforded by 'considerations of humanity and religious expediency' or by ecclesiastical enactment. The application to the Jewish Sabbath may be admitted, but 'the observance of Sunday does not comprise

7 Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth unto himself, and none dieth to himself.  
 8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live  
 9 therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died, and lived *again*, that he might be Lord  
 10 of both the dead and the living But thou, why dost

anything in common with that Sabbatic observance which sunders life into two parts, one sacred, the other profane. It is this legal distinction which Paul excludes in our ver. 5 and Col. 2' (Godet).—**And he that eateth, eateth unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks,** etc. The Apostle now reverts to the first point of difference, and applies to both parties the Christian maxim just laid down. All Christians were in the habit of thanking God at meals (and have been ever since). This was the proof that the man who ate without scruple ate as a Christian man, 'unto the Lord;' while on the other hand he who scrupulously abstained also regarded himself as abstaining from the same Christian motive, and hence gave thanks unto God over the meal of herbs to which he confined himself.

Ver. 7. **For none of us liveth to himself,** etc. The Christian's eating or not eating is unto the Lord, because the sum of his earthly existence, living and dying, is not 'to himself;' and this is true in the case of all. This is the negative side; the positive follows.

Ver. 8. **For whether we live, we live unto the Lord,** *i. e.*, Christ.—**We die unto the Lord;** even our dying is an act of consecration to Christ.—**Whether we live therefore,** etc. The whole course of our existence here being unto Christ, it follows that in all we belong to Christ, whose Divine majesty and power (Bengel) are set forth in the repetition of the word 'Lord.'

Ver. 9. **For to this end,** as described below, and including the thought of ver. 8, **Christ died and lived again,** or, 'became alive,' at the resurrection. There is general agreement as to the correctness of the briefer reading, from which the numerous variations can readily be explained. That followed in the A. V. contains two errors, and is poorly supported.—**Might be Lord of both the dead and the living.** The correspondence with what precedes ('died and lived') is intentional, but the two facts and classes should not be divided. God's purpose in Christ's death and resurrection together was that He might be Lord of the race of men, whether in the state of the dead or still living. Hence Christians, whether living or dying, belong to Him (ver. 8). Eph. 4: 10 contains a wider thought, which may be included here, though for the Apostle's argument the reference to believers is quite sufficient. Notice, that the Lordship is that of the risen Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word.

Ver. 10. **But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother?**

thou judge thy brother? or thou again, why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgement-seat of God. For it is written,

As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow,

And every tongue shall <sup>1</sup>confess to God.

12 So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.

<sup>1</sup>Or, *give praise*.

'Thou' is emphatic, 'thou' belonging to Christ the Lord. 'Thy brother' marks an advance in thought from vers. 3, 4. This is addressed to the weak brother.—**Or thou again, why dost thou set at nought thy brother?** Addressed to the stronger brother, who 'also,' by setting at nought his brother, overlooks the fact that both belong to Christ.—**For**, as a reason for both the preceding questions, **we shall all stand before the judgement-seat of God.** The oldest manuscripts read 'God,' which is accepted by nearly all modern critical editors. 'Christ' was probably substituted, to correspond with ver. 9, or, from 2 Cor. 5: 10. The question of the Divinity of Christ is not affected by the variation. 'The judging of one's brother, therefore, first encroaches upon Christ's office as ruler, and, second, anticipates the judgment bar of God' (Lange).

Ver. 11. **For it is written** (Is. 45: 23). The citation is freely made, the variations are: **As I live** for 'I have sworn by myself,' and **shall confess to God** for 'shall swear' (LXX. 'unto God'). The word 'confess,' followed by a dative, as here, has the signification, 'render homage,' 'give praise,' hence the marginal rendering is preferable. The general thought thus expressed by the Apostle lay at the basis of the more special one of the Old Testament passage. The whole, in any case, is regarded as a prophecy of the final judgment, furnishing a proof of the last clause of ver. 10.

Ver. 12. **So then each one of us**, etc. The emphasis rests on 'each one of us,' not on 'of himself,' or, 'to God.' There is no exception; let each remember this, and each will be guarded against judging his brother. 'That which precedes means: "Do not judge thy brother, since God will judge *him*"; this verse means: "Judge thou thyself, since God will judge *thee*."' (Godet.)

## CHAPTER 14: 13-23.

*Proper Use of Christian Liberty on the part of the Stronger Brethren.*

- 13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ye this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling.
- 14 I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean of itself: save that to him who accounteth any thing to be unclean, to him it is un-

2. *Proper Use of Christian Liberty on the part of the Stronger Brethren,*  
vers. 13-23.

The section opens with a caution against judging (ver. 13 a), which furnishes a transition to the leading thought, namely, that our practice should recognize the principle of not causing others to offend (ver. 13 b). This principle is further explained and enforced: our liberty should not grieve the weak brother (vers. 14-18), nor destroy in him the work of God, by leading him to do what he has not freedom of conscience in doing (vers. 19-23).

Ver. 13. **Let us not therefore judge one another any more.** Both classes are here addressed, since ver. 12, to which 'therefore' refers, included both; 'one another' points back to 'of himself' in the same verse. The clause, however, furnishes a transition to the exhortation to the strong.—**But judge ye this rather; not to put, etc.** There is a play on the word 'judge,' which here has the sense of forming a judgment as a principle of action.—**A stumbling block, etc.** Evidently this is addressed to those whose freer conduct gave offence to the weak brethren. The two expressions, here used, are regarded by many as synonymous, or the second as explanatory of the first. Godet refers 'stumbling block' to that which grieves the weak brother, and 'occasion of falling' to that which may lead him to sin by enticing him to act against his conscience. This view is favored by the fact that the section discusses these two forms of offence.—**In his brother's way.** Fellow Christians are spoken to and spoken of. The principle does not apply to all men, to the same extent. The 'brother' is assumed to have a conscience more enlightened than that of an unbeliever, whose judgment and ground of offence cannot therefore have the same weight.

Ver. 14. **I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus.** His knowledge on the point in question amounts to full conviction, growing out of his fellowship with Christ. The principle which he thus prefaces is: **that nothing is unclean, lit., 'common,' impure,** according to the distinction made by the Jews, and ascetics generally, **of itself, i. e., by nature.** There is some doubt about the correct

15 clean. For if because of meat thy brother is grieved,  
 . thou walkest no longer in love. Destroy not with thy  
 16 meat him for whom Christ died. Let not then your  
 17 good be evil spoken of: for the kingdom of God is  
 not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace

reading of this phrase, but the sense is well established. Paul thus declares that the freer brethren are in the right, these distinctions are not valid theoretically; but practically an exception must be made, which the Apostle enforces on the ground of love (ver. 15).—**But**, or, 'except.' If the latter sense be accepted, the exception holds good in regard to 'unclean,' not to 'unclean of itself.'—**To him who accounteth**, etc. 'Accounteth' is the word used of justification, it points to a judgment, not to moral quality.—**To him it is unclean**; the emphasis rests on 'to him;' his scruple makes it so for him.

Ver. 15. **For**. The best authorities give this reading. According to Meyer, it introduces the reason for speaking of the exception (ver. 14), namely, to warn against the lack of love in disregarding it. But it may be connected with ver. 13, and ver. 14 taken as parenthetical.—**If because of thy meat** (or, 'food') **thy brother is grieved**. The freer brother would eat that which the weaker reckoned unclean, and the latter would be 'grieved,' vexed in conscience. This is not identical with 'destroy,' which is a possible result of it.—**Thou walkest no longer in love**. Love limits liberty, and substitutes for it self-denial, even when the scruple is an incorrect one.—**Destroy not with thy meat**, etc. To this the grieving may lead; the weak brother may be so influenced as to act against his conscience, and so sin as to fall into eternal destruction. There is a pathos in the closing phrase: **him for whom Christ died**. If Christ gave up life for him, canst not thou give up a kind of food for him? 'Believers (the elect) are constantly spoken of as in danger of perdition. They are saved only if they continue steadfast unto the end' (Hodge). This principle holds good in this warning also.

Ver. 16. **Let not then your good be evil spoken of**, lit., 'blasphemed.' 'Then' implies that to act in the way forbidden in ver. 15 would have this result. The exhortation may be applied to the strong; 'good' referring accordingly to their Christian liberty, or strength of faith, which grieved the weak brethren, and would lead to censure. But many think the exhortation is addressed to the whole Church, since the plural is introduced here. 'Good' would then point to the doctrine of the gospel, or the kingdom of God (ver. 17). Those who 'blasphemed' would be such of the outside heathen world as noticed the discord. The wider view is favored, not only by the emphasis resting upon 'your,' but by the existence of 'our' as a various reading, pointing to a possession of the whole Church, and also by the thought of the next verse.

Ver. 17. **For the kingdom of God**. This kingdom is 'God's

18 and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that herein serveth Christ is well-pleasing to God, and approved of 19 men. So then <sup>1</sup>let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *we follow*.

dominion over the heart, instituted and administered by Christ; it is the heavenly sphere of life, in which God's word and Spirit govern, and whose organ on the earth is the Church' (Lange). To refer it here to the future Messianic kingdom seems impossible. If the previous verse refers to Christian liberty, then this verse urges a limitation of it, because nothing essential to the kingdom is involved in this restriction. But if all are addressed, then the motive is derived from the wrong estimate of Christianity which would be formed by those without who blasphemed their 'good.' As what follows has a special fitness for the *weak* brethren, the latter view is further sustained.—**Is not eating and drinking**; the act of eating and drinking, not, food (as in vers. 15, 20).—**But righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost**. Two views: (1.) 'Righteousness' from God (=justification), 'peace' with God (=reconciliation), 'joy in the Holy Ghost,' produced by fellowship with the Holy Spirit; these are named as the essential matters in the kingdom of God. This is favored by the tone of the entire Epistle. (2.) Others understand 'righteousness' as moral rectitude toward men, 'peace' as concord in the Church, and 'joy in the Holy Ghost' as above, but with a wider reference to the common joy of Christians. This view is favored by the context, especially vers. 18, 19, and by the practical nature of the entire passage.

Ver. 18. **For he that herein**, lit., 'in this,' according to the correct reading. Some have referred 'this' to the 'Holy Spirit,' which seems unnatural. Others, to avoid the difficulty, retain the poorly supported plural. 'Herein' points to the sphere of life, just described, and the verse confirms the statement of ver. 17.—**Serveth Christ**. This phrase not only indicates the moral reference of what precedes, but shows that duty in the kingdom of God consists in service of Christ.—**Is well pleasing to God**; since such service is what He enjoins, and approved of men; standing the test of their moral judgment—a fact not annulled by abnormal manifestations, in which misapprehension, perversion of the moral judgment, and the like are at work' (Meyer). Men can approve of the conduct of Christians, even while they hate it for the reproof it conveys.

Ver. 19. **So then let us**; an inference from vers. 17, 18. (The marginal reading is not well sustained).—**Follow after things which make for peace**; those things which constitute peace.—**And things whereby we may edify one another**. This is a paraphrase, but a correct one. Here the edification of individuals is meant; elsewhere the building up of the entire Church is spoken of.

20 another. Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of  
 God. All things indeed are clean; howbeit it is evil  
 21 for that man who eateth with offence. It is good not  
 to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *to do any thing*

Godet finds in this clause the beginning of the second part of the section: not only follow after peace, and thus avoid grieving the weak brother, but build up, instead of pulling down, the work of God already begun in his heart; vers. 20-23 carrying out the thought.

Ver. 20. **Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God.** The verb 'overthrow' is in contrast with 'edification,' up-building. Hence it is most natural to refer 'the work of God' to the Christian brother (as in ver. 15), but here in his relation to God as the author of his spiritual life. (Other explanations: Christian faith, the extension of the kingdom of God, the fellowship of faith.) To abuse Christian liberty is to fight against God.—**All things indeed are clean** (comp. ver. 14); **howbeit it is evil for that man who eateth with** (lit., 'through') **offence.** The exhortation is addressed to the strong brother, whose principle is admitted to be correct; but it does not follow that 'the man who eateth with offence' is the freer Christian who gives offence by eating. This gives to the phrase 'through offence' a very forced sense. It is rather the weak brother who is led by the example of the strong brother to eat *against his own conscientious scruple.* In such a case, according to the principle of ver. 14, it is evil to him. This is here urged upon the stronger brother as a motive, not to eat. This agrees best with what precedes, and is as accordant with the next verse as the other view.

Ver. 21. **It is good;** admirable, honorable, morally good, in view of what has been said; hence this is the general principle of action, for the *strong brother.*—**Not to eat flesh,** etc. This suggests that the weak brother had special scruples on the two points named, totally abstaining from animal food and wine.—**Nor to do anything.** It is best to supply 'to do,' since other things than eating and drinking are included.—**Whereby;** lit., 'in which,' referring to all that precedes.—**Stumbleth.** Some of the most ancient authorities omit the rest of the verse. While it is difficult to decide which is the correct reading, the preponderance is slightly in favor of the briefer form. The principle is included in the word 'stumbleth,' which is related to that rendered 'offence' (ver. 20). (If the longer reading be accepted, 'made weak' should be changed to 'is weak;' the meaning being, that we should avoid the weak point of a Christian brother, even when knowing that his scruple is incorrect.) A strong Christian should strive to act upon the principle of this verse, but the weak brother has no right to demand it of him; such a demand is a confession that he is wrong in his scruple. The self-denial of the strong is not a warrant for the tyranny of the weak, who should study the passages meant especially for him.

22 whereby thy brother stumbleth<sup>1</sup>. The faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself before God. Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he<sup>2</sup> approveth.  
 23 But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities add *or is offended, or is weak.*

<sup>2</sup> Or, *putteth to the test.*

<sup>3</sup> Many authorities, some ancient, insert here ch. xvi. 25-27.

Ver. 22. **The faith which thou hast**, etc. The authority for 'which' is decisive, and this reading gives the above rendering, which does not alter the purport of the verse.—**Have thou to thyself before God**; it is not necessary to parade it before men. This is a commendation of the position of the strong brother: keep this faith because it is well founded, but keep it to thyself, when it might injure the weak brother.—**Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he approveth**; tests and then chooses to do. 'It is indeed a happy thing to have no self-condemnatory scruples of conscience, but, on the other hand, it is fatal to have scruples and to disregard them' (Sanday).

Ver. 23. **But he that doubteth** (in contrast with the one who judgeth not himself) **is** (has been and is) **condemned if he eat**. 'The act of eating itself condemns him, of course, according to the Divine ordering, so that the justice of this verdict appears not only before God, but before men, and himself also' (Philippi). This guards against the extreme view, that 'condemned' refers to eternal condemnation — **Because he eateth** (or, 'it is') **not of faith**; his eating was not an ethical result of his faith in Christ; comp. vers. 1, 2.—**And** ('for' is incorrect) **whatsoever is not of faith is sin**. This is the general truth underlying the previous statements. 'Faith' here is saving faith (and not subjective, moral conviction), regarded as a principle of life, informing the morals of the Christian. 'It refers as always to the acceptance of the salvation obtained through Christ. That which one cannot do as his redemption and in the enjoyment of His salvation, he should not do at all, otherwise that act of which faith is not the soul, becomes sin, and can conduct to the result indicated in ver. 20: the total destruction of the work of God in us' (Godet).—The conduct of Christians alone is under discussion; so that there is no direct application of the principle to unbelievers. But making due allowance for the statements of chap. 2: 14, 15, respecting the natural law of conscience, the passage furnishes a strong indirect proof of the sinfulness of all acts not resulting from faith; especially in view of the previous demonstration of the Apostle in chaps. 3: 18-20. The more important matter is, however, to remember that for Christians, at least, Christian ethics should have full validity, and that here the principle admits of no exception: whatsoever is not of faith is sin; genuine Christian morality is all of faith. On the doxology inserted at this point in some authorities, see p. 225.



## CHAPTER 15: 1-13.

*General Discussion of the Relations of the Strong and Weak.*

1 Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmi-  
 2 ties of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let  
 each one of us please his neighbour for that which is  
 3 good, unto edifying. For Christ also pleased not  
 himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them

3. *General Discussion of the Relations of the Strong and Weak, passing over into Expressions of Christian Praise, vers. 1-13.*

This section opens with a statement of the principle which should govern the strong brethren (ver. 1), which is at once extended to both classes (ver. 2), as an injunction to please our neighbor. The motive is found in the example of Christ, as indicated in an Old Testament prophecy (ver. 3). The quotation suggests the patience and comfort of the Scriptures (ver. 4), the word of the God of patience and comfort (ver. 5) who alone can unite their hearts for common praise of the Father (ver. 6). Common praise suggests anew the duty of fellowship, even as Christ received them all that all might praise God (ver. 7). For He received Jews to fulfil God's promises (ver. 8), and Gentiles to awaken praise for God's mercy, as the Scriptures abundantly testify (vers. 9-12). The section closes appropriately, invoking blessings from the God of hope (ver. 13).

On the special questions respecting chaps. 15 and 16, see pp. 255, 256.

Ver. 1. **Now we that are strong.** 'Then' is incorrect, though the connection is logically with what precedes.—**Ought to bear**, as a burden is borne.—**The infirmities of the weak**; all such weaknesses of faith, but particularly those referred to in the previous discussion. This bearing is often simply forbearing, but frequently involves forgiving, and self-denying. 'Thus they, in themselves strong and free, become the servants of the weak, as Paul was servant of all; 1 Cor. 9: 19, 22' (Meyer). He is indeed strong who can thus bear.—**And not to please ourselves.** Such moral selfishness is involved in disregarding the weaknesses of the brethren who have false scruples.

Ver. 2. **Let each one of us** (weak as well as strong) **please his neighbour for that which is good**, lit., 'the good,' but it seems best to explain 'for his benefit.'—**Unto edification**, with a view to building him up in Christian character, defines more especially wherein this 'good' consists.

Ver. 3. **For Christ also**, etc. 'Also' is slightly preferable to 'even.' 'The example of Christ is for the believer the new law to be made real (Gal. 6: 2); hence the *for also*' (Godet.)—**But, as it is written** (Ps. 69: 9), **the reproaches of them that reproached**

4 that reproached thee fell upon me. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort  
5 of the scriptures we might have hope. Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same  
6 mind one with another according to Christ Jesus: that

**thee fell upon me.** The citation is from the LXX., which literally reproduces the Hebrew. The clause may be connected directly with 'but;' some supplying: 'it came to pass,' before 'it is written.' In the Psalm, 'thee' refers to God, and 'me' to the Messiah, or the person who is a type of the Messiah. The sufferings of Christ, according to the Psalm, were to fulfil the Father's purpose; since this purpose was for the salvation of men the passage has here its most appropriate application.

Ver. 4. **For.** This introduces a justification of the previous citation, and a preparation for the subject which follows, the duty of being 'of the same mind one toward another' (ver. 6).—**Whatsoever things were written aforetime.** Evidently including the whole Old Testament.—**Were written for our learning;** to instruct us also; the immediate design does not preclude this further and permanent one, a principle which underlies many other citations made by the Apostle.—**That through patience and through comfort of the scriptures.** 'Of the Scriptures' qualifies both words: the patience and comfort produced by a study of the Scriptures; the repeated 'through' does not disconnect them, but gives rhetorical emphasis. 'Patience' is especially needed to hold out in not pleasing ourselves (ver. 1), and 'comfort' or, 'consolation,' that we may find joy therein.—**We might have hope,** lit., 'the hope,' the specific hope of the Christian, possessing more and more of it by means of the patience, etc. Those who neglect the Old Testament Scriptures may well remember that this expresses the Christian experience of an inspired Apostle.

Ver. 5. **Now the God of patience and of comfort** (as in ver. 4). 'He well knows that the Scripture itself is inefficacious without help of the God of the Scriptures' (Godet). He is the source of the patience and comfort they afford.—**Grant you to be of the same mind one with another.** Thus the Apostle returns to the leading thought of the section. 'To be of the same mind' points to harmony of feeling in their intercourse, rather than to unanimity of opinion on the disputed points of practice. For such harmony patience and comfort are needed; only the God of patience and comfort can produce these, but He produces them through the Scriptures.—**According to Christ Jesus.** According to His example (ver. 3), but also according to His will as Head of the Church and according to His Spirit as the Life of the Church.

Ver. 6. **That with one accord ye may with one mouth**

with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the  
7 God and Father\* of our Lord Jesus Christ. Where-  
fore receive ye one another, even as Christ also re-  
ceived <sup>1</sup>you, to the glory of God. For I say that  
Christ hath been made a minister of the circumcision  
for the truth of God, that he might confirm the pro-

\* Or, *God and the Father*.—*Am. Com.*

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities read *us*.

glorify, etc. 'One accord' results from being 'of the same mind' and is in its turn the source of the praising 'with one mouth.' It is in the utterance of common praise that harmony of feeling finds its highest expression.—**The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.** The phrase is the same as in Eph. 1: 3. Here as there, it seems better to connect 'of our Lord Jesus Christ' with both words. The rendering of the A. V., and of the margin of the Am. Com. is, however, grammatically unobjectionable (comp. the list of passages in the Appendix of the American Committee).

Ver. 7. **Wherefore receive ye one another**, etc. Since this utterance of praise is so sacred a privilege, they are exhorted, strong and weak alike, to receive one another (comp. chap. 14: 1) in Christian fellowship.—**Even as Christ also received you.** Good authorities read 'us:' but the weight of evidence is in favor of 'you,' which here includes all the Roman Christians, not merely those of Gentile origin.—**To the glory of God**, *i. e.*, that God might be glorified. This is to be joined with 'as Christ also received you,' since vers. 8, 9, explain this purpose of Christ's receiving them. This is, however, a motive for receiving one another, that all may together praise God. (Comp. ver. 6.)

Ver. 8. **For I say.** 'For' is strongly supported, and introduces the explanation of how Christ had received both Jewish Christians (ver. 8), and those of Gentile origin (ver. 9): 'the connection of the former with Christ appears as the *fulfilment of their theocratic claim*, but that of the latter as the *enjoyment of grace*' (Meyer).—**That Christ** (the word 'Jesus' is to be omitted) **hath been made** (not only became, but continues to be) **a minister of the circumcision**; *i. e.*, those circumcised, as so frequently in Paul's writings. The emphasis rests on the word 'minister' which suggests the condescension of Christ, as an example of humility. His obedience to the law (Gal. 4: 4; Phil. 2: 7) may also be suggested, showing how he entered into fellowship with the weak.—**For the truth of God** (His veracity) **that he might confirm** (by fulfilment) **the promises given unto the fathers** (in the Old Testament). Thus Christ's receiving the Jews was 'to the glory of God,' showing His faithfulness, and this furnished a motive for fellowship. 'That he might' (R. V.) is substituted for 'to' (A. V.), to indicate the parallelism with ver. 9.

- 9 mises *given* unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written,  
 Therefore will I <sup>1</sup>give praise unto thee among the Gentiles,  
 And sing unto thy name.
- 10 And again he saith,  
 Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.
- 11 And again,  
 Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles;  
 And let all the peoples praise him.
- 12 And again, Isaiah saith,

<sup>1</sup> Or, *confess*.

Ver. 9. **And that the Gentiles might glorify God.** This expresses another purposed result of Christ's having been made a minister. Many commentators, however, take it as dependent upon 'I say' (so A. V.), yet *praised* (at the time of conversion), or, ought to praise, or, do praise. But Christ's ministry among the Jews hath this further purpose; comp. Gal. 4: 5.—**For his mercy.** Whatever view be taken of the construction this is the main point of contrast. In the case of the Jews God's faithfulness was proven, in the case of the Gentiles His mercy.—**As it is written** (Ps. 18: 50), **For this cause I will give praise** (comp. chap. 14: 11) **unto thee among the Gentiles** (lit., 'among Gentiles'), etc. The quotation, made exactly from the LXX., 'originally spoken by David of his joy after his deliverance and triumphs, is prophetically said of Christ in His own Person. It is addressed to show that among the Gentiles Christ's triumphs were to take place, as well as among the Jews' (Alford).

Ver. 10. **Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.** From the LXX., Deut. 32: 43. But our Hebrew text reads: 'Rejoice, O ye nations, His people.' Probably the LXX. follows another reading, though other explanations have been suggested. In any case the praise of Gentiles is predicted.

Ver. 11. **Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles.** From Ps. 117: 1, exactly after the LXX., in this clause; in the second the best authorities support the reading: **and let all the peoples praise him.** The A. V. follows the text which conforms to the LXX.

Ver. 12. **Isaiah saith** (Is. 11: 10); from the LXX.—**There shall be**, etc. The Hebrew is more closely rendered in our version: 'And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek.' But the LXX. presents the same thought in a strengthened form well suited to the Apostle's purpose. These citations, taken from the three divisions of the Old Testament (Law, Psalms, and Prophets) confirm Paul's view of his own work as well as furnish a motive for unity. The last clause:

There shall be the root of Jesse,  
 And he that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles ;  
 On him shall the Gentiles hope.

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Ghost.

**on him shall the Gentiles hope**, forms a fitting conclusion. Thus through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures he had hope (ver. 4), and this all might have. 'For this adoration of the Gentiles, to which the four preceding citations refer, is the fruit not only of the enjoyment of actual blessings but also and preëminently of the hope of future blessings' (Godet).

Ver. 13. **Now the God of hope**, etc. Most aptly is God here called the God of hope (comp. the similar repetition, vers. 4, 5), the God who produces the hope they possess. 'As vers. 1-4 passed into a blessing (vers. 5, 6), so now the hortatory discourse, begun afresh in ver. 7, passes into a blessing, which forms, at the same time the close of the entire section (from chap. 14 onwards).' (Meyer.)—**With all joy and peace**. These are based on hope, but are the direct fruit of **believing**.—The end of this being filled with joy and peace is the increase in turn of hope: **that ye may abound in hope**; and this not by their own power, but **in the power of the Holy Ghost**. 'Believing,' is the subjective state, but this is the objective means, the *inworking* power. As the Holy Spirit is the author of peace, and as faith and hope, peace and joy, are the greatest helps to true unity, this benediction is a fitting close to the exhortation respecting mutual forbearance and true fellowship, which forms the most striking passage in the practical part of the Epistle. The Apostle's main task is now completed; he prepares at once for the conclusion of his letter.

### III. CONCLUDING PORTION OF THE EPISTLE.

This part of the Epistle may be divided into four sections. (1.) Personal explanations, similar to those in chap. I: 8-15 (chap. 15: 14-33). (2.) Greetings to different persons at Rome (chap. 16: 1-16). (3.) Closing exhortation, with greetings, from various persons (chap. 16: 17-24). (4.) Concluding Doxology (chap. 16: 25-27).

#### 1. *Personal Explanations*, vers. 14-33.

This section forms an 'epilogue' (Meyer), corresponding in matter with the introductory paragraph; chap. I: 8-15. The Apostle first expresses his confidence in the Roman Christians, and, in a partially apologetic tone, justifies his writing to them by a reference to his office as Apostle to the Gentiles (vers. 14-16), by a statement of his principle of labor (vers. 17-21), which had hindered him from going to Rome (ver. 22). He then speaks of his hope of visiting them (vers. 22, 24), after he had fulfilled his service in carrying alms to the poor saints at Jerusalem (vers. 25-29), in which service and hope he asks their prayers (vers. 30-32), adding a brief benediction (ver. 33),

## CHAPTER 15: 14-33.

*Personal Explanations.*

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.  
 15 But I write the more boldly unto you in some measure, as putting you again in remembrance, because of  
 16 the grace that was given me of God, that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus unto the Gentiles, <sup>1</sup>ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, being sanctified

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *ministering in sacrifices.*

Ver. 14. **And I myself also**, or, 'even I myself.' The latter implies: 'even I, the one who has just admonished you; have this favorable conviction respecting you'; the former, 'I of myself,' without the testimony of others, or, 'I as well as others.' The first view accords with chap. 7: 25, but the implied contrast in ver. 15 seems to favor the second.—**My brethren.** This direct affectionate address indicates the return to more personal matters.—**Ye yourselves**; 'without any exhortation of mine' (Alford).—**Are full of goodness**; moral excellence in general, though it may be specially applied to kindness.—**Filled with all knowledge**; Christian knowledge, moral as well as intellectual.—**Able also to admonish one another**; without assistance from without. This is a special result of the preceding qualities ascribed to them. It requires abundance of goodness as well as of knowledge to fit us for mutual admonition.

Ver. 15. **But** (though I am convinced of this, yet) **I write** (lit., 'I wrote,' in this Epistle) **the more boldly** (in contrast with the assurance of ver. 14 respecting their goodness, etc.) **unto you in some measure**; *i. e.*, in parts of this Epistle; the phrase qualifies the verb, not 'more boldly' as if the sense were: 'somewhat too boldly.'—**As putting you again in remembrance**; simply as one who reminds you.—**Because of the grace that was given**, etc. His apostolic office is referred to in this phrase; this was the ground and reason of his boldness. But notice the humility of the great Apostle.

Ver. 16. **That I should be**, etc. The purpose of the grace given him.—**A minister**; not the word usually so rendered (as in ver. 8), but one applied to a minister in public worship (our word 'liturgy' is allied to this); it is more closely defined by what follows.—**Of Christ Jesus**; as the Head and King of the Church, not as Highpriest.—**Ministering the gospel of God.** The word 'minis-

17 by the Holy Ghost. I have therefore my glorying  
 18 in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God. For I  
 will not dare to speak of any <sup>1</sup>things save those which  
 Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the  
 19 Gentiles, by word and deed, in the power of signs and

<sup>1</sup> Gr. of those things which Christ wrought not through me.

tering' does not correspond with the previous one, but distinctly expresses priestly service (R. V. marg.). Yet the gospel is not the offering, but in his preaching of the gospel he renders priestly service, and in this way: **that the offering up of the Gentiles**, the offering consisting of them, **might be made acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost**; not consecrated after the Levitical ritual, but truly by means of the indwelling Spirit. This verse is properly used to oppose the idea that the Christian ministry is a priesthood. If the Apostle had laid any claim to sacerdotal functions, or designed to give any warrant for such claim on the part of Christian ministers, he would not have expressed himself as he does here. The offering is figurative; the priestly functions are figurative. 'This is my priesthood, to preach the gospel. My knife is the word, ye are the sacrifice' (Theophylact). 'With such sacrifices God is well pleased.'

Ver. 17. **I have therefore my glorying**; comp. chap. 3: 27; here used in a good sense.—**In** (not 'through') **Christ Jesus**; only in fellowship with Him can he glory; thus incidentally opposing the thought that his glorying was in himself.—**In things pertaining to God**, lit., 'the things toward God,' referring to his 'ministering as a priest,' etc. (ver. 16). It does not limit, but defines the 'glorying.' The explanation: 'I have offerings for God, namely, Gentile converts,' seems far-fetched. This verse furnishes a transition to the statement of the principle governing his labors (vers. 17-21), the carrying out of which had hindered him from visiting Rome' (ver. 22).

Ver. 18. **For I will not dare** ('be bold,' probably in allusion to ver. 15) **to speak**, etc. The emphasis rests not on the word **Christ**, but on the phrase, **wrought not**, literally rendered in the margin, 'wrought not through me'; the contrast being, not with what he did of himself, or strictly with what others did, but more exactly with what Christ had wrought through him. The sense is: I will speak boldly, have my ground of glorying, only in such things as Christ wrought through me.—**For the obedience of the Gentiles**, with this design and result, that they became obedient to Christ by believing in Him.—**By word and deed**. This phrase qualifies 'did work through me,' etc. 'Word' refers to his preaching; 'deed' includes all the other labors of his apostolic activity.

Ver. 19. **In the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Holy Ghost**. Some authorities read 'Spirit of God,' and the Vatican manuscript has 'Spirit' alone; but the best estab-

wonders, in the power of <sup>1</sup>the Holy Ghost; so that from Jerusalem, and round about even unto Illyricum, I have <sup>2</sup>fully preached the gospel of Christ; 20 yea, <sup>3</sup>making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was *already* named, that I might not

<sup>1</sup> Many ancient authorities read *the Spirit of God*. One reads *the Spirit*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *fulfilled*.

<sup>3</sup> Gr. *being ambitious*.

lished form is as above. The two clauses are parallel, and should be closely joined with what precedes. Christ wrought through him, in word and work, in virtue of these powers: that proceeding from (miraculous) signs and wonders, and that which came from the Holy Spirit working through him on the minds of men. 'A miracle is a sign, inasmuch as it teaches truth: it is a wonder, in that it creates astonishment' (Beet).—**So that from Jerusalem**, the actual starting-point of his apostolical labors (Acts 4: 28, 29; 22: 18), **round about**, not in the arc of a circle, but in a wide circuit, round about Jerusalem.—**Even unto Illyricum**. Illyricum was north of Macedonia. No mention is made in the Book of Acts of a visit there. Hence many have thought that the Apostle thus indicates the limit of labors. But it is quite probable that during the journey mentioned in Acts 20: 1-3 (just before the writing of this Epistle), he actually entered that region.—**I have fully preached** (lit., 'have fulfilled') **the gospel of Christ**. The A. V. fairly presents the sense, though a variety of other explanations have been suggested, *e. g.*, have given the gospel its full dimensions, completely proclaimed it, accomplished everything with it, etc. He had fully spread the glad tidings and with success everywhere, sufficient to attest his apostolic mission, and give him a ground of glorying in what Christ had wrought through him.

Ver. 20. **Yea, making it my aim**. The participle here used means, 'to make it a point of honor,' but this exact sense need not be pressed here.—**So to preach the gospel**; 'to evangelize,' not the same word as in ver. 19. 'So,' *i. e.*, in this manner (as afterwards defined), may qualify the participle, but the sense is better expressed in English by the above rendering.—**Not where Christ was already named**. 'Already' is properly supplied; 'named, as the object of faith and the Person to be confessed, by other laborers, as appears from the next clause: **that I might not**, etc. This principle, here negatively stated, was not adopted to avoid opposition, or in consequence of differences with the other Apostles, nor yet of an arrangement to divide geographically the mission field, but resulted from the high sense of his duty as an Apostle, *to lay the foundation of a universal Church*. His writing to Rome was not contrary to this principle, which concerned his labor in person, not his intercourse by letter with churches he had not founded.



21 build upon another man's foundation; but, as it is written,

They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came,  
And they who have not heard shall understand.

22 Wherefore also I was hindered these many times  
23 from coming to you: but now, having no more any  
place in these regions, and having these many years a  
24 longing to come unto you, whensoever I go unto Spain  
(for I hope to see you in my journey, and to be  
brought on my way thitherward by you, if first in  
some measure I shall have been satisfied with your

Ver. 21. **But**, preaching the gospel in this way, not where others had preached, but **as it is written** (according to this rule of Scripture), **They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came, And they**, etc. From Is. 52: 15, following the LXX., which adds 'of him' (comp. the A. V., which renders the Hebrew accurately). The prophecy refers to 'kings,' but is properly applied to nations whom they represent; the wide extension of the Messiah's kingdom being the main thought.

Ver. 22. **Wherefore also**. Because of this aim of wide missionary activity, not because a church had already been formed at Rome.—**I was hindered these many times** (or, 'for the most part'). Some authorities read: 'oftentimes' as in chap. 1: 13; but the usual reading is better supported. Of the two renderings given, the latter refers to the principal (though not the only) cause of his not visiting them; the other, to the frequency of the hindering. Either is allowable, but we prefer the latter.

Vers. 23, 24. The construction of these verses occasions much difficulty, which was relieved by the insertion of the clause (ver. 24): 'I will come to you,' to complete the sense: decisive authority proving the words to be an interpolation. Another attempt to relieve the abruptness was made by omitting 'for' in the same verse; but here too the weightiest evidence is against the easier reading. We are compelled then to accept a broken construction as follows: 'But now no more having place in these parts, and having these many years a longing to come unto you, whensoever I journey into Spain (for I hope, as I am journeying through, to see you, and to be sent forward thither by you, if first I be in some measure filled with your company)—but now,' etc. The sense would be the same, if the participles of ver. 23 were rendered as verbs, and a period placed after the word 'Spain.'—**But now**. The Apostle begins to say that the main hindrance is removed; in ver. 25 he states the special reason for delay.—**Having no more any place**. Opportunity to carry out this principle of labor.—**In these regions**; spoken of in ver. 19.—**Whensoever**

25 company)—but now *I say*, I go unto Jerusalem, min-  
 26 istering unto the saints. For it hath been the good  
 pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain  
 contribution for the poor among the saints that are at  
 27 Jerusalem. Yea, it hath been their good pleasure ;  
 and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have  
 been made partakers of their spiritual things, they  
 owe it *to them* also to minister unto them in carnal

**I go unto Spain.** Paul does not use the common Greek name for Spain ('Iberia'), nor even the exact Latin one. Whether this purpose was ever fulfilled is unknown, and immaterial as respects the visit to Rome. God's purpose, not Paul's, was carried out in the actual visit to the imperial city.—**Hope** ; not, 'trust.'—**In my journey.** This qualifies both the following clauses.—**And to be brought on my way thitherward by you.** (Some authorities read: 'from you.') He hoped to obtain companions, and doubtless other friendly furtherance.—**In some measure** ; 'not as much as I will, but as much as is permitted' (Grotius). Not merely complimentary.—**Satisfied with your company.** 'Spiritual satisfaction through the enjoyment of the longed-for personal intercourse.' (Meyer.)

Ver. 25. **But now.** Partly resumptive of ver. 23, since it returns to his present circumstances, but introducing a new thought in contrast with the hope expressed in ver. 24.—**I go unto Jerusalem** (am on the point of doing so), **ministering unto the saints.** How is afterwards explained. The present participle indicates that the journey is part of the ministering. On this service, see 2 Cor. 9: 1, 2; Acts. 24: 27.

Ver. 26. **For it hath been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia.** Personification for the Christians in these provinces ; the latter included Greece proper.—**A certain contribution.** The Greek word means 'fellowship,' 'communion,' and is allied with 'communicate' (Gal. 6: 6). No contribution belongs to Christian charity, unless it is willingly bestowed and as a matter of fellowship.—**For the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem.** Community of goods evidently did not exist in the church of Jerusalem. The number of poor saints there need occasion little surprise.

Ver. 27. **Yea, it hath been, etc.** The Apostle emphasizes by the repetition the willingness of the Grecian Christians, but adds another statement to mark the reasonableness of such contributions: **and their debtors they are** ; such gifts were a matter of repayment.—**They owe it to them also to minister, etc.** The word 'minister' is that used of priestly service (comp. 'minister of Christ Jesus;' ver. 16), not that found in ver. 25. To such priestly service

28 things. When therefore I have accomplished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by 29 you unto Spain. And I know that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of Christ.

30 Now I beseech you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit, that ye strive to-

belongs the privilege and duty of providing for the poor saints. This thought is the more emphatic, in view of the antithesis between **spiritual things** and **carnal things**; the former referring to the gifts of the Holy Spirit which came to the Gentiles from the mother church at Jerusalem (comp. Acts 11: 20); the latter including those things which pertain to the external, material, side of man's nature. The reference to the Holy Spirit does not require the ethical sense in this contrast, though the reverse is true.

Ver. 28. **When therefore**, etc. Reverting to the hope expressed in ver. 24.—**Have sealed to them this fruit.** Secured to them as their property the 'fruit,' the produce, of this contribution. Some take 'sealed' in a literal sense, but this seems out of keeping with the tone of the passage. 'The Apostle is *moved* by the thought that with the close of the work of love to which he refers he was to finish his great and long labors in the East, and was to take in hand a new field in the far West. In these circumstances an unusual thoughtful expression for the concluding act offers itself naturally.' (Meyer.)—**I will go on by you unto Spain.** The full idea of the original is: I will depart (or, return) from Jerusalem, pass through your city, and go unto Spain. From Spain the way was discovered, after many centuries, to a farther West.

Ver. 29. **And I know that**, etc. The Apostle's humility did not prevent him from knowing this and writing of it. More confidence of *this kind* would promote humility in the preacher.—**In the fulness of the blessing of Christ.** 'Of the gospel' is a gloss, to be rejected on decisive authority. Christ's blessing in abundance he knew would attend him at Rome.

Ver. 30. **Now I beseech you, brethren.** This fervent exhortation is the natural expression of his confidence in them and of the anticipation he has respecting what awaits him at Jerusalem (comp. Acts 20: 22; 21: 10, etc).—**By our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the Spirit.** 'For' is incorrect in both cases; 'through' is the literal sense, with the same force as in chap. 12: 1, presenting a motive. 'Love of the Spirit' is that affection wrought by the Holy Spirit. Between Paul and the mass of his readers personally unknown to him, only such a love could be urged as a motive. It is more extended than personal affection.—**That ye strive together with me** (the figure is that of a contest in the games) **in your prayers,**

31 gether with me in your prayers to God for me; that I  
 may be delivered from them that are disobedient in  
 Judæa, and *that* my ministration which *I have* for Je-  
 32 rusalem may be acceptable to the saints; that I may  
 come unto you in joy through the will of God, and to-  
 33 gether with you find rest. Now the God of peace be  
 with you all. Amen.

etc. 'Your' brings out the force of the article; the possessive pronoun, though found in some authorities, must be rejected.

Ver. 31. **That, etc.** The purpose and purport of the prayer.—**That are disobedient**; comp. chap. 11: 30. The word may mean 'unbelieving,' and in any case the two senses are closely related, but the unbelief of the Jews is here regarded as disobedience to the gospel.—**And that my ministration** (of alms) . . . **may be acceptable** (the same word as in ver. 16) **to the saints.** Besides the hostility of the Jews, he must encounter the doubts of the Jewish Christians, whom he however calls 'saints.'

Ver. 32. **That I may come unto you in joy** (the emphasis rests on this phrase) **through the will of God** (there is considerable variation in the manuscripts, but this seems the best established reading), **and together with you find rest** (some authorities omit the last clause). The reality was entirely different from this hope and prayer; but we cannot doubt that the Apostle's arrival at Rome was 'in joy,' even though in bonds, since in all he submitted himself to the will of God.

Ver. 33. **Now the God of peace, etc.** A benediction was natural, and the anticipated conflicts might well lead him to speak of God as 'the God of peace.'

## 2. *Greetings to Different Persons at Rome, 16: 1-16.*

The bearer of the letter is commended in vers. 1, 2. Then follow greetings to many individuals, and to some households or household churches. About one-third of the persons mentioned are women. On the names as indicative of origin and station of the believers at Rome, see *Intro.*, §1. Of this chapter, Chrysostom says: 'It is possible even from bare *names* to find a treasure.' The list shows: (1.) Paul's personal regard; (2.) The high place he accords to women; (3.) The constitution of the Roman congregation; (4.) The great influence he exerted, since so many friends were present in a place he had never visited; (5.) The undying name received from his friendly mention, is a type of the eternal blessing which belongs to those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Classic authors have not preserved for us the record of so many friends; the mention of their friends has not awakened so great an interest as this list of humble people whom they would have despised. Bishop Lightfoot (*Philippians*, pp. 169-176) finds that most of the names occurring in this chapter occur also in the inscriptions discovered in recently excavated burial places at Rome

## CHAPTER 16: 1-16.

*Greetings to Different Persons at Rome.*

1 I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, who is a  
 2 <sup>1</sup>servant of the church that is at Cenchreæ: that ye  
 receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and  
 that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have  
 need of you: for she herself also hath been a suc-  
 couer of many, and of mine own self.

<sup>1</sup> Or, *deaconess*.

(*columbaria*). These inscriptions refer mainly to freedmen and slaves of emperors, and it is a fair inference that some of the imperial household are included here (comp. Phil. 4: 22). Identification of the persons is of course impossible. The names are mainly Greek ('Mary' alone is Jewish), but this gives no clue to the nationality, since Greek names were borne by the Hellenistic Jews. We may suppose that many of those saluted here were of Jewish extraction; proportionally more than in the Roman congregation as a whole

Ver. 1. **I commend**, etc. Both an introduction and a commendation are suggested.—**Phœbe our sister**; a Christian believer; this is the general ground for receiving her.—**Who is a servant**, or, 'deaconess,' etc. This is the special reason, in view of the fidelity with which she had fulfilled her duty (ver. 2). It is implied that she occupied this position at the time Paul wrote. The word here used may mean 'servant,' but it is unlikely that this is the sense, since there were deaconesses in the Christian church during the first century, their duty being to take care of the sick and poor, and of strangers, in the female portion of the churches. The rigid separation of the sexes made this the more necessary. The custom continued for centuries in the Greek church. In the Protestant church the office of deaconess has recently been revived. The Roman Catholic Church has, as is well known, special orders of *celibate* women to perform the duties properly belonging to this office. The term here used may be either masculine or feminine. Some regard the 'widows' spoken of in 1 Tim. 5: 3-16 as deaconesses, a view opposed by Neander; see Schaff, *Apostolic Church*, p. 535, where the identity is defended. Phœbe was the bearer of the letter, else no such special mention would have been necessary. From the independent manner of her movements, it has been inferred that she was a widow.—**Cenchreæ**. The eastern port of Corinth, about nine English miles from that city. To argue from this that the letter was addressed to Ephesus, or some church east of Corinth, is puerile.

Ver. 2. **That ye receive her in the Lord**. This is the purpose of the commendation, that the Roman believers give her a *Christian*

3 Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers in  
4 Christ Jesus, who for my life laid down their own  
necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also

welcome.—**Worthily of the saints**, as saints ought to receive such an one.—The Greek adverb is uniformly rendered 'worthily' in the R. V. (comp. Phil. 3: 27).—**And that ye assist her**, etc. The term used is a legal one, and hence it has been inferred that her visit to Rome was on private legal business. It is unlikely that she was traveling in the discharge of her official duty as deaconess.—**For she also herself hath been a succourer of many**. The word used is an honorable one, indicating service bestowed by a superior on inferiors (patroness). It suggests here her labors as deaconess, though it may include private service.—**Of mine own self**. Where is unknown; possibly Paul had once been ill during a visit to Cenchreae, or the Apostle may have made her house his home, as in the case of Lydia, at Philippi. This commendation has the true Christian tone; what she has done for other Christians gives her a claim on the helpfulness of the Roman believers.

Ver. 3. **Salute**. 'Greet' (A. V.) and 'salute' represent the same word throughout the chapter.—**Prisca and Aquila**. 'Priscilla' is the diminutive form, found elsewhere and in the versions and Fathers. The wife seems to have been the more prominent and active Christian; her name comes first in Acts 18: 2, as well as here. Then as now, capacity and filelity formed the standard. 'This married couple, tent-makers like Paul (Acts 18: 3), expelled from Rome as Jews under Claudius, had been converted at Corinth by Paul (see on Acts 18: 1), had then migrated to Ephesus (Acts 18: 18, 26; 1 Cor. 16: 19), are now again in Rome; but, according to 2 Tim. 4: 19, were at a later period once more in Ephesus' (Meyer). Their stay at Ephesus has been made the basis of the theory that this chapter (or Epistle) was originally addressed to that city; but persons of their trade would be apt to travel extensively.—**Fellow workers** (so A. V. in Col. 4: 11) **in Christ Jesus**. They had wrought together at their common handicraft, but this refers to working for Christ, in Him as the sphere of activity. On the question whether 'Prisca' publicly preached, comp. the Epistle addressed to the church where she first labored for Christ (1 Cor. 14: 34).

Ver. 4. **Who for** ('in behalf of,' not, 'instead of') **my life laid down**, etc. Lit., 'laid under,' used of submitting to execution. That they underwent peril of their life for the sake of Paul is clearly meant whether at Ephesus or Corinth is uncertain, since in both places Paul had been exposed to violence. But the mention of this fact opposes the Ephesian destination of the chapter.—**All the churches of the Gentiles**; evidently including the Roman congregation. The Gentile churches owed gratitude for what was done in behalf of the Apostle to the Gentiles.

5 all the churches of the Gentiles: and *salute* the church that is in their house. Salute Epænetus my beloved, 6 who is the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ. Salute 7 Mary, who bestowed much labour on you. Salute Andronicus and <sup>1</sup>Junias, my kinsmen, and my fellow-

<sup>1</sup> Or, *Junia*.

Ver. 5. **And salute**; the verb is properly supplied, but the clause is grammatically connected with ver. 3, and should form a part of ver. 4.—**The church that is in their house.** The early Christians had, as a rule, no public place of assembly, but probably met in the houses of the more prominent brethren. In larger cities there seem to have been several such places of meeting; and one of these is here referred to. The language of Justin Martyr sustains this view. The same persons were doubtless wont to gather there, forming a household parish of the one Roman congregation. As the city was four miles in circumference, there was a necessity for a number of these assemblies.—**Epænetus my beloved.** All the persons named, from this point to the close of the section, are unknown. ‘The legends of the Fathers made the most of them martyrs and bishops, and the *Synopsis* of Dorotheus misplaces the most of them among the seventy disciples’ (Meyer).—**The first-fruits of Asia unto Christ**; *i. e.*, among the first converts in the Roman province of Asia, of which Ephesus was the chief city. Comp. 1 Cor. 16: 15, where the same expression occurs. There ‘Achaia’ is the correct reading; here ‘Asia’ is much better supported. The change may have arisen from the fact that this Epistle was written in Corinth, the capital city of Achaia.

Ver. 6. **Salute Mary.** This is the sixth person of this name mentioned in the New Testament. Otherwise unknown, but characterized as one **who bestowed much labor on you.** So the best authorities and most recent editors. ‘Bestowed labor’ points to practical activity, in charity and womanly ministrations. When preaching and teaching are meant, ‘in the word’ is usually added.

Ver. 7. **Andronicus and Junias**, or, ‘Junia.’ It is impossible to decide which form of the latter name is correct; if the feminine form (‘Junia’) be accepted, then the wife or sister of Andronicus is meant. But the description is supposed by many commentators to favor the reference to a man.—**My kinsmen.** This may mean ‘fellow-countrymen,’ here and in vers. 11, 21; but all the persons thus termed may have been actual ‘kinsmen.’ It cannot be affirmed that they were not.—**My fellow-prisoners.** When and where is unknown.—**Who are of note among the apostles**; honorably known by the Apostles. The phrase does not imply that they were Apostles. So loose a sense of the term cannot be accepted: see Schaff, *Apostolic Church*, pp. 512, etc.—**Who also** (*i. e.*, the two persons named, not ‘the Apostles’) **have been in Christ before me.** Be-

prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who  
 8 also have been in Christ before me. Salute Ampliatus  
 9 my beloved in the Lord. Salute Urbanus our fellow-  
 10 worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. Salute  
 Apelles the approved in Christ. Salute them which  
 11 are of the *household* of Aristobulus. Salute Herodion  
 my kinsman. Salute them of the *household* of Nar-  
 12 cissus, which are in the Lord. Salute Tryphæna and  
 Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute Persis  
 13 the beloved, which laboured much in the Lord. Sa-

came Christians before the conversion of Paul; probably in Judea, since they were known to the Apostles. Paul had a nephew at Jerusalem, we learn from Acts 23: 16.

Ver. 8. **Ampliatus**; so the weightier authorities; 'Amplias' is an abbreviated form. 'A common name in itself, it occurs several times in connection with the imperial household' (Lighfoot). The same is true of nearly every name in the rest of the section.—**My beloved in the Lord**; in Christian fellowship.

Ver. 9. **Urbanus** (the Latin form of this Latin name) **our fellow-worker in Christ**. 'Our' refers not to Paul alone, since he says 'my' so frequently here, but to the Roman Christians also.—**Stachys my beloved**. The variety in these commendatory phrases was probably due to specific reasons.

Ver. 10. **Apelles**. Not to be confounded with 'Apollos.' The name occurs in Horace (Sat., i. v. 100) as that of a Jew. He may have been a freedman, as some suppose, but the name was not uncommon. There are various conjectures as to the grouping of freedmen and slaves in these salutations.—**The approved in Christ**; one whose Christian steadfastness had been tested.—**Of the household of Aristobulus**; the Christians in that household (comp. ver. 11), probably slaves. There is no evidence that the person named was a believer; the phrase used has been thought by some to indicate that he was dead.

Ver. 11. **Narcissus**. A powerful freedman of Claudius bore this name, but died two or three years before this Epistle was written. Possibly the household of this person is meant.

Ver. 12. The three persons mentioned in this verse were probably deaconesses.—**Persis**. The name is derived from Persia, but on this fact no inference can be based. This woman is not only distinguished by the mention of her greater labor, but is called **the beloved**. Meyer notices the delicacy of the phrase; not, 'my beloved,' as in the case of the men referred to in vers. 5, 8.

Ver. 13. **Rufus**. Possibly the person mentioned in Mark 15: 21, since Mark probably wrote in Rome. But the name was frequent.—



lute Rufus the chosen in the Lord, and his mother  
 14 and mine. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes,  
 Patrobas, Hermas, and the brethren that are with  
 15 them. Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his  
 sister, and Olympas, and all the saints that are with  
 16 them. Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the  
 churches of Christ salute you.

**The chosen in the Lord**; not merely 'elect in Christ,' but a chosen distinguished Christian man.—**His mother and mine.** 'His mother by nature, mine by maternal kindness' (Webster and Wilkinson). The peculiarly affectionate tone suggests some special kindness, in regard to which we can only conjecture. If she were the wife of Simon of Cyrene and had lived at Jerusalem, opportunities to befriend Paul would have been frequent.

Ver. 14. The numerous group here referred to was probably intimately associated, and less known to the Apostle.—**Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas** is the order of the best authorities. The last named person can scarcely be the author of the *Shepherd of Hermas*, since that work was probably not written before the middle of the second century.—**The brethren that are with them.** Comp. ver. 15. The two phrases may refer to household churches, or to associations of Christians for business purposes. The former seems more probable. In that case *five* assemblies are indicated.

Ver. 15. **Julia**; probably the wife of Philologus.—**Olympas** is the name of a man.—**All the saints**, etc. In any case pointing to a numerous body of Christians.

Ver. 16. **Salute one another with a holy kiss.** 'The meaning of this injunction seems to be, that the Roman Christians should take occasion, on the receipt of the Apostle's greetings to them, to testify their mutual love, in this, the ordinary method of salutation, but having among Christians a Christian and holy meaning' (Alford). The custom is still known in the Greek Church.—**All the churches of Christ salute you.** The word 'all' was probably omitted by the scribes, because the expression seemed too extensive. But Paul was in communication with most Christian churches; all such would feel interested in the believers at Rome, and if, as is probable, his intention of going there was known, many salutations would be intrusted to him. As he knew so well the believers at Rome which he had not visited, how well qualified he was to speak for the many believing assemblies he had himself organized.

## CHAPTER 16: 17-24.

*Closing Exhortation, with greetings from various persons.*

17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the <sup>1</sup>doctrine which ye learned: and turn  
18 away from them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the

<sup>1</sup> Or, *teaching.*

3. *Closing Exhortation, with Greetings from various persons, vers. 17-24.*

The warning of this section (vers. 17-20) indicates, not the presence of false teachers at Rome, but rather the danger of such persons making their appearance. The tone of the warning suggests this, as well as the fact that it occurs incidentally in a closing paragraph, instead of in the body of the Epistle. That Jewish zealots for the law were those against whom the Apostle warns is the most probable view. The description of ver. 18 is plainly applicable to these Judaizers, to whom the weak brethren would afford an opportunity. Vers. 21-24 form a distinct paragraph. Most of the names are found in the Book of the Acts, but the persons may be different, except in the case of Timothy. Attempts have been made to prove that this paragraph was not destined for Rome, or is not genuine, but there is nothing whatever in the passage itself (certainly not in the warning against false teachers) to confirm either of these opinions. (Comp. Introduction, § 5, and Excursus at the close of this chapter)

Ver. 17. **Now I beseech you, brethren.** Comp. chap. 15: 30. —**Mark them**; note carefully. In Phil. 3: 17, it is applied to those who are to be imitated.—**Them which are causing, etc.** The present tense indicates that such persons were doing this, but not necessarily at Rome.—**The divisions and occasions of stumbling.** The article (in the Greek) points to known matters. The two words refer to divisions in churches and to temptations to depart from the gospel basis of faith and life. Others, with less reason, apply them to doctrinal divisions and moral offences.—**Contrary to the doctrine, or, 'teaching.'** The former rendering may mislead: the reference is to the entire range of Christian truth. The commendation of their teachers implied here indicates that the church was founded mainly by Christians of the Pauline type.—**Turn away from them.** There is no reference to official excommunication, but to a rule of private conduct toward such. The other might follow, but that was for the local church to determine.

Ver. 18. **For they that are such, etc.** Comp. Phil. 3: 18, 19. —**Our Lord Christ**; He is the true Master (notice the unusual form, which is supported by all the early manuscripts), yet they do

19 innocent. For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I rejoice therefore over you: but I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple  
20 unto that which is evil. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

not serve Him, **but their own belly**; a figure for sensuality. It is remarkable how often schismatics, have proved their Epicureanism.—**By their smooth and fair speech**; lit., ‘by the kind speaking and blessing.’ These terms refer either to the tenor and force of their word, or the former may point to the mark of kindness, and the latter to flattery. The unctiousness of sensual hypocrites is well known.—**Beguide the hearts of the innocent**; those who are unsuspecting, unwary. How many were deceiving and deceived appears from Phil. 1: 15, written from Rome a few years after this. Undue severity cannot be ascribed to the Apostle’s language: few earnest Christian teachers have failed to observe how apt it still is.

Ver. 19. **For your obedience**, etc. ‘Obedience’ to the gospel, obedience of faith, is meant, as throughout the Epistle. (This commendation does not necessarily point to a church in which the Apostle had personally labored, as Weiss holds.) Because of their well-known obedience, he does not class them among the ‘innocent.’ This view of ‘for,’ as implying an antithesis, is further favored by the next clause. Other views: I warn you thus, because your obedient disposition is well known. The former gives an unusual sense to ‘obedience;’ the latter does not accord well with the force of ‘for’ and ‘therefore.’—**I rejoice therefore over you** (the better supported order places the emphasis on this phrase): **but I would have you**, etc. A delicate combination of warning with the expression of firm confidence. Here is the added reason for the exhortation of ver. 17.—**Wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil**. ‘Simple’ is not the same word as in ver. 18; it might be rendered ‘harmless,’ as the margin of the A. V., since it denotes ‘unmixed,’ ‘pure,’ ‘free from.’ ‘Unto’ in both cases points to the result. Wisdom is needed that we may rightly do what we know to be right; but in regard to what is evil, the one way is the simple, unmixed way of avoiding it altogether.

Ver. 20. **And the God of peace** (so designated in contrast with those who cause divisions, ver. 17) **shall bruise Satan** (who moves all these disturbing teachers) **under your feet shortly**. The figure is based upon Gen. 3: 15. God will give them the victory; both agencies will be employed. ‘Shortly’ is usually taken in the sense of ‘soon.’ ‘The preservation of primitive Christianity from the fatal errors that very soon assailed it is one of the most striking of the gracious providences of God toward His church’ (Shedd). But Godet

21 Timothy my fellow-worker saluteth you; and  
 22 Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen. I Tertius,<sup>1</sup> who write the epistle, salute you in the Lord.  
 23 Gaius my host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the treasurer of the city saluteth you, and Quartus the brother.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or, *who write the epistle in the Lord, salute you.*

<sup>2</sup> Some ancient authorities insert here ver. 24 *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen,* and omit the like words in ver. 20.

gives it the sense of 'rapidly,' as better supported by usage. A reference to the return of Christ is by no means necessarily implied.—**The grace of our Lord,** etc. This benediction, except the word 'Amen,' is supported by the oldest authorities (two of them omitting 'Christ'), most of them, however, omitting ver. 24 (see below). The salutations which follow seem to have been added after the Epistle was virtually ended.

Ver. 21. **Timothy my fellow-worker saluteth you.** That Timothy was with Paul at this time appears from Acts 20: 4. He is named here, and not, as in other cases, at the beginning of the Epistle, because he too was personally unknown to the Roman congregation.—**Lucius.** Not 'Luke,' but possibly 'Lucius of Cyrene' (Acts 13: 1).—**Jason.** This may refer to the person named in Acts 17: 5, as a resident of Thessalonica.—**Sosipater.** The same name as 'Sopater' (Acts 20: 4), and possibly the same person. All three names were frequent.—**My kinsmen.** Comp. vers. 7, 11. Here also the term probably means more than 'countrymen.' That Paul's relatives should become Christians, and be associated with him, is probable enough.

Ver. 22. **I Tertius.** Otherwise unknown; probably an Italian, though some have sought to identify him with Silas, because the Hebrew word answering to Tertius sounds like Silas.—**Who write the epistle.** 'Wrote' is more literal, but 'write' gives the sense of this epistolary aorist. Paul seems to have dictated most of his letters. It was natural that the amanuensis, as a Christian brother, would send his salutation in the first person. In ver. 23 the dictation is resumed.—**In the Lord.** It is more natural to connect this with 'salute,' though the Greek order permits it to be joined with 'write.' (So R. V. marg.)

Ver. 23. **Gaius mine host.** Paul was lodging with this man, as he had previously done with Aquila and Justus (Acts 18: 1-7). The name occurs in connection with Paul in 1 Cor. 1: 14; Acts 19: 29; 20: 4. The same person is probably meant in the first instance, probably in the last, and possibly in all three.—**And of the whole church.** This may mean that a household church met with him, or that he was universal in his hospitality to Christians.—**Erastus the**

## CHAPTER 16: 25-27.

*Concluding Doxology.*

25 <sup>1</sup>Now to him that is able to stablish you according  
to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, ac-  
cording to the revelation of the mystery which hath  
26 been kept in silence through times eternal, but now is

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit vers. 25-27. Compare the end of ch. xiv.

**treasurer** (lit., 'steward') of the city; of Corinth. This may be the person mentioned in Acts 19: 22; 2 Tim. 4: 20; but in that case he had relinquished his office before that time.—**Quartus the brother**; some Christian brother, known to the believers at Rome, but totally unknown to us.

Ver. 24. This verse is omitted by the best authorities. The repetition of the benediction is not so unexampled as to have given offence to the early transcribers, while it might readily have been transferred from ver. 20. On the relation of this question to that of the doxology, see Excursus, p. 255.

4. *Concluding Doxology, vers. 25-27.*

In no other Epistle does the Apostle conclude with a *doxology*, but this need occasion no difficulty. The passage bears every internal evidence of genuineness, and is exceedingly appropriate. 'As a final complete conclusion, we have now this *praising of God*, rich in contents, deep in feeling (perhaps added by the Apostle's own hand), in which the leading ideas contained in the whole Epistle, as they had already found in the introduction (chap. 1: 1-5) their prelude key-note, and again in chap. 11: 33-36, their preliminary doxological expression, now further receive, in the fullest unison of inspired piety, their consecrated outburst for the ultimate true consecration of the whole' (Meyer).

Ver. 25. **Now to him**, etc. This is the usual form in a doxology; 'the only wise God' (ver. 27), is in apposition with 'Him,' all that intervenes being descriptive. There is, however, a grammatical difficulty, owing to the change of construction in the latter part of ver. 27. The phrase on which all that precedes logically depends ('be the glory') is placed in a dependent relative clause. Some have thought that in beginning the Apostle had in mind another form of expression than a doxology, and that the relative in ver. 27 refers to Christ, while others regard the relative as an interpolation (see below).—**That is able to stablish you**. This particular designation of God is appropriate in this Epistle.—**According to my gospel**. It is difficult to determine the exact sense and connection of this phrase, but it seems best to join it with 'stablish,' with the sense 'in reference to my gospel,' that you may remain steadfastly faithful to the teaching I have set forth. Others give it the wider sense of 'in subordination to and according to the requirements of my gospel' (so

manifested, and <sup>1</sup>by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is

<sup>1</sup> Gr. *through*.

Alford). The explanation 'through' is lexically untenable.—**And the preaching of Jesus Christ.** This is closely joined with the preceding phrase, and is probably an explanation of it; either the preaching concerning Christ, which is the substance of his gospel, or the preaching which Christ causes to be promulgated through him. 'Preaching' here means the thing preached, and the former explanation is preferable, since it follows the analogy of the phrase 'the gospel of Christ.' The Apostle would thus efface what might seem too personal in that noun, "according to my gospel" (Godet). To refer the phrase to the preaching of Christ Himself when on earth, is unwarranted.—**According to the revelation,** etc. The connection of the clause here introduced has been explained in three ways: 1. Coordinate with 'according to my gospel,' etc., and thus closely connected with 'stablish.' 2. Explanatory of the whole preceding statement, and thus defining 'able to stablish,' etc. 3. Explanatory of 'my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ,' connected with the verbal idea therein implied. The last seems least defensible grammatically. Either of the other two would be linguistically correct, but it is more probable that 'according to' here has the same sense as before. We therefore prefer (1.), which gives us another designation of the gospel, 'as the revelation of the primitive sacred mystery' (Meyer).—**Of the mystery.** The article is wanting in the Greek, but what follows explains 'mystery' as the specific one on which the Apostle delighted to dwell. On the word, see chap. 11: 25, but especially Eph. 1: 9. Here, as in Ephesians, the contents of this mystery are, in general, the salvation of sinful men, decreed from eternity, accomplished by Christ, proclaimed through the gospel to all men; hence the gospel is the revelation of the mystery. The Apostle in such expressions, however, seems always to have in mind the extension of salvation to the Gentiles, so that they become one body with believing Jews (see Eph. 3: 3-9; Col. 1: 26). But the view we take of the connection prevents our limiting the reference to this extension.—**Hath been kept in silence through times eternal.** The thought is a common one in the Apostle's writings. 'Times eternal' include all the ages of human history, but also plainly suggest that eternal past when God formed His counsels of redemption (Eph. 1: 4). 'Since the world began' (A. V.) needlessly limits the sense to the period since the creation.

Ver. 26. **But now is manifested.** The emphasis rests on 'manifested;' the whole thought is explanatory of the 'revelation of the mystery,' and in contrast with the long silence just spoken of (ver. 25). 'Now,' as usual, refers to the period since the gospel was preached. 'Manifested' suggests the revelation of the mystery made to the Apostles (comp. Eph. 3: 5); while 'is made known' which all the rest of the verse qualifies, points to the publication of the mystery

made known unto all the nations unto obedience <sup>1</sup> of

<sup>1</sup> Or, *to the faith.*

through preaching. The two expressions, however, are closely united by *and* (in the original a conjunction used only to connect similar things).—**By the scriptures of the prophets.** This is the first of four qualifying phrases joined with 'is made known.' These point respectively to (1) the *means*, (2) the *cause*, (3) the *objects*, and (4) the *aim* of this publication. In the original the order of (3) and (4) is inverted, to give that emphasis to the universality of the proclamation which befits the close of this Epistle. The arrangement of these phrases is not arbitrary. 'The scriptures of the prophets' were actually the means employed in the universal diffusion of the gospel. (The article is wanting. Comp. chap. 1: 2.) Until they were fulfilled the matter was still a mystery, but Christ Himself, as well as His Apostles, constantly used the Old Testament to teach evangelical truth. It is altogether unnecessary to argue from this reference to the Old Testament that the 'mystery' spoken of is exclusively the reception of the Gentiles. The entire mystery of redemption could be made known through the Old Testament, when once it had been manifested to the inspired Apostles. Godet labors to prove that New Testament prophetic writings are here meant, but such a sense is not obvious. In fact the statement that the mystery had been kept in silence (ver. 5) seems to require a reference to the Old Testament; otherwise the Apostle would have failed to give it the place in this grand passage which it has everywhere else in New Testament history and literature (see again, chap. 1: 2).—**According to the commandment of the eternal God.** The reference to the Scripture naturally suggests God who spake through the prophets. But it is not necessary to take this phrase as subordinate to 'Scriptures'; still less to make it parallel with 'according to' in ver. 25. The publication of the gospel was by Apostles who were fully persuaded that the same God who spoke through the prophets had sent them by specific commandment: comp. Matt. 28: 19, 20, and the Apostle's language everywhere. 'Eternal' is appropriately used here, since the whole passage has reference to what he has disposed 'during eternal ages' as well as in the present.—**Unto all the nations.** 'Unto' here points to the local extension of the gospel; it was made known so as to reach 'all the nations.' (The introduction of this phrase opposes the limitation of 'mystery' to the fact of the reception of the Gentiles; what was made known unto them was the entire gospel mystery). The universal scope of the gospel has been the groundstone of the whole epistle; hence this phrase stands last in the original, to give it due emphasis.—**Unto obedience of faith.** Precisely as in chap. 1: 5: 'in order to produce obedience to faith,' to make men become believers. (Here also 'the faith' is misleading.) The gospel was made known: by Divine authority, through recorded prophecy now fulfilled, in order to make men believe, and extended to all the nations. In the mystery thus

27 faith ; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ,  
<sup>1</sup>to whom be the glory <sup>2</sup>for ever. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Some ancient authorities omit *to whom*.

<sup>2</sup> Gr. *unto the ages*.

made known, which was really the Apostle's gospel, God was able to stablish them. Beginning with the form of a doxology to this God of powerful helpfulness, he has so enlarged upon the method of His help as to render a resumption necessary ; see next verse.

Ver. 27. **To the only wise God**, etc. The construction presents a grammatical difficulty. Efforts have been made to avoid it by rejecting **to whom** ; but a due regard for external authorities will not permit this. We regard the opening phrase as a resumption of the doxology begun in ver. 25, and the relative as an irregular construction. The difficult question still remains : does 'to whom' refer to 'the only wise God,' or to 'Jesus Christ?' Explanations : 1. It refers to God. This is grammatically most probable, since otherwise the entire passage is left without any logical form. A change of construction is common enough in Paul's writings ; but we can hardly accept a logically incomplete doxology. 'Through Jesus Christ' may then be explained as meaning that God through Christ appears as the absolutely wise God (Meyer). This view of the A. V. (and many older versions and commentators), which joins 'through Jesus Christ' with 'be the glory,' is opposed by the presence of the relative. 2. Many refer the doxology to Christ. The Apostle might utter such a doxology, but it seems harsh to turn the reference from the leading Person in the entire passage. 3. Godet refers the relative to both God and Christ, urging that it is difficult to separate them in a passage like this. In chap. 1 : 7, 'the two substantives are placed under the government of one and the same preposition ; they might therefore here be included in the same pronoun.' But such interpretation is precarious. The view of Meyer seems preferable.—**Be the glory forever**. 'The glory,' which befits Him (see chap. 11 : 36). 'Be' is properly supplied, rather than 'is.' The latter would give a true sense, but this is an ascription of praise. The Apostle, who had dived so deeply into the riches of the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus, might well close such an Epistle by declaring that God was revealed as absolutely wise through Jesus Christ, and ascribe to Him, as such, the glory forever. And when, through the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to this gospel, the mystery of God's love in Jesus Christ shall be made known unto all the nations, and they, through the written revelation, become obedient to faith ; then to Him at whose command the message is proclaimed, and who is therein revealed as the only wise God, to Him be the glory forever.—**Amen**. They only say 'Amen' who labor for and await the final triumph of Him whose plan of saving grace is so fully set forth in this great Epistle. The subscription found in the A. V. is omitted in the R. V. (so in all the Epistles). In this case it is correct, though of course not genuine, since none of the older authorities (before the ninth century) give this form.



## EXCURSUS ON CHAPTERS 15, 16.

As already stated in the Introduction, the integrity of the Epistle to the Romans has been frequently discussed; some rejecting chap. 15, 16 as un-Pauline, others denying their place in this Epistle. The main reason for such discussions is found in the peculiar phenomena discoverable in early manuscripts respecting the place of the concluding doxology.

I. THE TEXTUAL PHENOMENA. (1.) The doxology is found at the close of chap. 16: in Aleph B, C, D. (four of the five earliest Greek manuscripts), in the Peshito, Vulgate and other versions, and in some Fathers. All recent critical editors accept this position. (2.) The verses stand immediately after chap. 14: 23, in L, most of the cursive Greek manuscripts, in several versions, and in six important Greek fathers. This position was accepted by some textual critics of the last century, and usually by those authors who deny the integrity of the Epistle. (3.) In A and a few cursives the doxology occurs in both places. That it was repeated in the original letter is very improbable; but the existence of this repetition in so old a manuscript as A (fifth century), shows an early doubt as to the true position. (4.) A later corrector of D, usually known as D<sup>3</sup>, marked these verses for erasure; in F and G they do not occur, but a space has been left blank in chap. 14 (not exactly at the same point), as if with the design of inserting them. Marcion rejects them, and Jerome found a few manuscripts which omitted them. (5.) No authorities omit chap. 15, 16.

II. THE GENUINENESS OF THE DOXOLOGY. The variation in position calls for a satisfactory explanation, but it is least of all accounted for by denying the genuineness of these verses. The manuscript authority is overwhelming, and the internal evidence very strong. Although Paul's doxologies are usually simple, at the close of *this Epistle* such a sentence as this need occasion no surprise. Moreover the expressions are Pauline and the style precisely that which is found in passages where he writes with his own hand. This he probably did in the case of this doxology.

III. THE GENUINENESS OF CHAPS. 15, 16. In the case of so long a passage, containing so many personal details, the burden of proof rests with those who deny the genuineness. Hence few critics have been bold enough to take a decided position against the Pauline authorship of the chapters. (Baur is one of the few.) We may regard the genuineness as now universally accepted.

IV. THE DESTINATION OF THESE CHAPTERS. Here also the burden of proof rests with those who deny the place of the chapters in the Epistle to the Romans.

I. *The Roman Destination.* The usual view is, that the Epistle was written originally and sent to Rome in the full form, and that the doxology was displaced in some later copies. This displacement may have been due to the habit of copying the Epistles for public reading, the final chapters being omitted, as less suitable for this purpose in all the churches. It is objected that all the ancient lectionaries contain these chapters. 'But the epoch when the omission of these two chapters would have taken place is much earlier than the date of the collection of the pericopes which have been preserved for us' (Godet). Other reasons have been assigned for the position of the doxology at the close of chap. 14, by those who accept the Roman destination of the concluding chapters. The theory of Bishop Lightfoot, which is given in the Introduction, is the most plausible one, though it seems to place too early the briefer form of the Epistle.

2. *The non-Roman Distinction.* Here a number of conflicting theories have been suggested. The view of Renan makes of these chapters a patch-work collection of the various personal and local items written by the Apostle, but for different churches to which the Epistle was sent as an encyclical letter. Semler, Paulus, and many others, had previously suggested this composite character. Admitting this theory, we give to each critic the liberty of dissecting the chapters and exercising his ingenuity in disposing of the *disiecta membra*. 'Among all the reasons which are adduced in support of these different opinions, none hold good, not even those which seem least founded upon mere arbitrariness' (Meyer). Most of these theories, however, agree in designating Ephesus as the place for which these salutations (in whole or in part), were destined, assuming that Aquila and Priscilla could not have been at Rome when this Epistle was written, but probably were at Ephesus. It is a pure assumption. In their zeal for the gospel, these two could as readily go from Ephesus to Rome as they had gone from Corinth to Ephesus (Acts 18: 18, 19); especially as they had previously resided in Italy (Acts 13: 2). The further assumption that Paul could not have had so many acquaintances in Rome, but would send greetings to many in Ephesus, scarcely deserves an answer. The movements among the early Christians was very great. The classes to which they belonged were great travellers. Every hint we have of the social life of the early Church sustains the probability that the Apostle did know many Christians at Rome before he visited that city. The fact that he wrote his longest Epistle to the congregation there is of itself a proof that personal ties were not wanting. Here we may revert again to the list of names in chap. 16: 1-16. Bishop Lightfoot's comparison with the inscriptions in the excavated *columbaria* shows 'that the names and allusions at the close of the Roman Epistle are in keeping with the circumstances of the metropolis in St. Paul's day.' We therefore accept the integrity of the Epistle as one addressed to the Romans. This is the only solution of the whole question which has positive evidence to support it, and it agrees best with all the phenomena, external and internal, which enter into the discussion.

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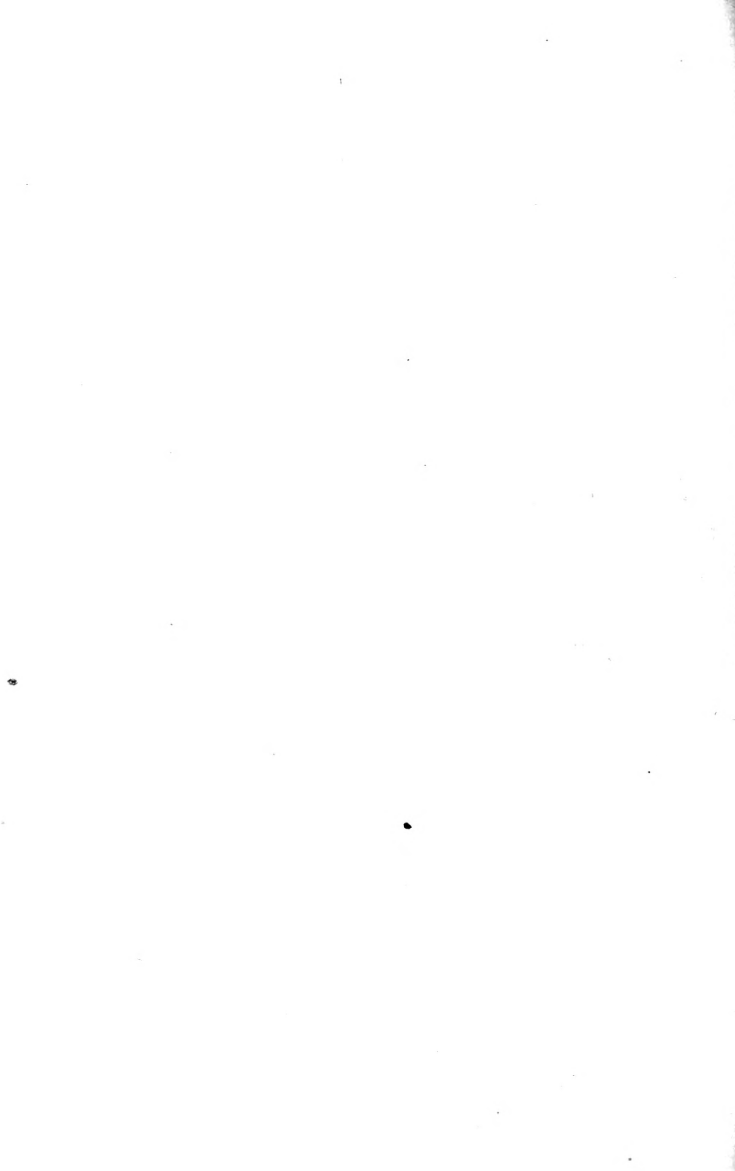
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